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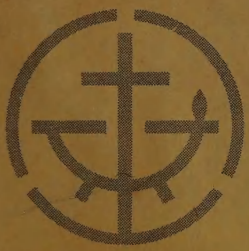
SHOWING THE RETURN OF THE LORD TO BE NEAR AT HAND

BY
REV. W. LAMB.



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SIGNS

SHOWING THE RETURN OF THE LORD TO BE NEAR AT HAND.

BY

REV. W. LAMB.

Author of "Dark Days and Signs of the Times," "Great Future Events," "The Great Pyramid Witness," "The Times of the Nations," "The World in Convulsion," "Great Britain in Prophecy," Spiritism," "Sound the Alarm," etc.

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PREFACE

The only intention of this book, as in regard to the others I have written, is to convince all who read, that the coming again to this world of the Son of God from Heaven, would seem now to be very near at hand. It is not possible for any man to say the day or the hour. This the Father has reserved within His own power. But, in the Bible, certain clearly defined signs are given, by which may be known the absolute nearness of the great event. What the Lord Himself said was, "When ye shall see all these things, know that He is near, even at the doors." (Matt. 24: 33.) And, again, "When these things BEGIN to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." (Luke 21: 28.)

Well, this book has been written to show that all of the things our Lord indicated have, at least, BEGUN to come to pass. Its exhortation, therefore, is to encourage all of God's people to look up to the heavens, for their deliverance, through the coming again of their Saviour and Lord, that now seems to be very near at hand. Herein also will be found the word of solemn warning for those, who as yet, have never truly received the salvation of God, which now is possible for everyone by acceptance of the Gospel of Divine grace, made known through the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

So deep is my conviction that the second coming of our Lord and Saviour is now so actually near, that the mighty event may happen at any time, even before the present generation has passed from the earth, that I have made arrangements for a first edition of 10,000 copies of this book to be made immediately available. It really is something in the nature of a very big adventure, but now, it is my earnest prayer, that every copy will in some way be used to awaken men and women to the reality of God and the eternal.

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CHAPTER I.

The Signs of The Times.

"O, ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times?" (Matt., 16-3.)

"Can ye not discern the Signs of the Times?" It is a question that really should startle. It is the Lord who asks the question, and the time is about the close of His earthly ministry. For some three years He has offered Himself to the Jews as their long-expected Messiah. And what a remarkable period it has been! Strange things have testified of Him! Never before in all the experience of this wonderful nation has there been such a bewildering succession of remarkable happenings. To us now the evidence then presented in support of His divine claim is overwhelming. Yet, notwithstanding the miracles they have seen and the wonderful things they have heard, they demand a sign from Heaven. This is that the truth of what He has taught, and claimed for Himself, may be acceptable. Was it any wonder then that in crushing words He sternly indicates the measure of their folly?

"When it is evening, ye say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is red. And in the morning it will be foul weather to-day, for the sky is red and louring.' O, ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the Signs of the Times? But there shall no sign be given unto this generation than that already given."

What Does It Mean?

Now, what is the purpose of the startling question thus raised? Surely nothing less than, that it should have been just as easy for them to recognise Him as their long-promised Messiah as to tell the kind of day it was going to be from

the signs in the sky. These were the leaders, and the official teachers of the Scriptures, in which were so plainly recorded the things in relation to Him, and which were then actually happening right before their very eyes. For their prophets had frequently foretold that not only would their Messiah be ultimately revealed in wonderful power and glory, but that He also would be first manifest in deep humiliation. They must certainly have read how that He was to come in lowly mien, a Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; that He would ride into Jerusalem, not as haughty conqueror on white majestic charger, but humbly, on a colt, the foal of an ass, and that in such lowly manner He would present Himself as their King in the Temple. It was also written that He would teach in parables, and perform healing wonders; that He would be despised and rejected of men, be wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities, and in His dying find only a place with the transgressors.

Everything that had happened, in the earthly life of our Lord, had been accurately foretold in the Scripture. And here is the distinct proof that Holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Spirit of God. They clearly foretold the tendencies of great movements that would develop about the time of Messiah, and they also gave minute descriptions of the things that would then be happening.

Yet, while all the things, which were so long before foretold, are actually taking place, by which they may as easily recognise their Lord as they are able to discern the prospects of the weather, they impertinently demand some other sign from Heaven. What, then, is the meaning of this amazing incident? Surely, it is, that even the most prominent of Church leaders may actually show themselves to have no real knowledge of the sacred things they are supposed to teach. They may have hearkened more to the traditions of men than to the Word of God. That is why our Lord charged the priests and the scribes and pharisees with hypocrisy and folly. Mark well the deplorable result to the Jews of their unpardonable blindness! This people then missed the Divinely-ordained opportunity, and for 1900 years have paid the fearful penalty in a continued tragedy, terrible to contemplate.

Now For the Modern Application.

"Can ye not discern the Signs of the Times?" Is this question not as much for us now as for those to whom it was first addressed? I am sure it is. If it were possible for the Jews of Christ's day to discern the Signs of the Times in which they lived, it is surely as possible for us in these remarkable days of ours, more especially as all the signs, now, clearly indicate the fast-approaching end of the Gospel age. Very many devout students of the Scriptures believe they do that. We are indeed living in solemn and remarkable days. Never before have events so big with momentous unfoldings been transpiring on the earth as in these present times. Great changes have taken place in every sphere during the last few years, but greater changes are more than probable in the near future. To-day the world is making history very rapidly. Most thoughtful people have a distinct feeling that we are on the eve of some stupendous event, and that the whole world is fast nearing some great universal crisis.

Our Lord's Return Must Be Near.

The words of prophecy and the Signs of the Times are so startlingly coincident that many prayerful readers of the Bible are altogether convinced that the Second Advent of Christ is rapidly drawing nigh, that the coming of the Lord is at our very doors. This book has been written just to show that all the things now happening in the world have been accurately and clearly foretold in the Scriptures. And the happenings at this present time indicate an actual condition of things exactly similar to the prophesied condition of the world immediately before the Second Advent of our Lord from Heaven.

The wonderful things, coming to pass in these days, definitely indicate that God is speaking solemnly and clearly to the world, reminding us that our Lord is near, even at its very threshold.

Some Deny Any Advent of Christ.

Do not misunderstand me. There are very many modern preachers who reject all such doctrine. For these, there is no Second Advent of Christ. To them the world will con-

tinue on in the way it has always done until what they call the leaven of the Gospel of Christ will somehow succeed in bringing the whole of humanity into one universal brotherhood—so, that this old earth will have eventually become a grand place in which to live. That is the position taken by some with legitimate claim to scholarship.

But, after all, it was exactly like this when our Lord came the first time. And here in our Scripture we see the scholars, the cultured and leisured classes, and the high dignitaries of official religion sending along their supercilious request for our Lord to provide them with some sign from Heaven. Fools, and slow of heart to believe! Hypocrites ye are. Ye can discern the face of the sky, but can ye not discern the signs of the times? This we cannot forget, that a man may have a considerable knowledge in regard to human philosophy and worldly wisdom, and yet be entirely ignorant of the plain teachings of the Scriptures. At any rate, it was so in Apostolic days! Thus we read, "Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world. For after that in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." In this matter the world has not altered much, if any at all.

It is, therefore, of first importance for us that we keep in mind the Apostle Paul's earnest warning to the Colossian Christians: "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." Eternity will surely reveal the awful fact that a great number of precious souls have been hopelessly demoralised, and for ever lost, through the deadly influence of vain philosophy, and the arrogant pretensions of modern scholarship.

The asphyxiating gases that had long emanated from certain German Universities were even more diabolical in their fearful effects than were those poisonous gases that were let loose first in the greatest war of all history. We shall afterwards discern how that this is one of the remarkable signs, which plainly indicate the near return of our precious Lord.

The Message From God To You.

But advanced scholarship, which is often only another name for destructive criticism, need not, yes, and dare not, be permitted to intrude between the Divine message and the soul for whom it is given. If God has given a Revelation to men, it must be with the Divine intention, and power, to convey that Revelation in such a form that men can receive it, without requiring the assistance of either a scientific or philosophic scholarship. You will immediately perceive, that we have sufficient Scriptural authority for such a claim. The Apostle John affirms, that "we need not that any man teach us," and our Lord Himself, when referring to the judgments that will happen at His Advent, said: "I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and of earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." (Matt., xi., 25). My reader, you are entirely independent, in regard to the pretensions of modern scholarship. The message is from God to you. There has ever been too much of a priestly and overbearing interference, between the Divine message and the souls for whom it is sent. The Jews would never have crucified their Messiah, but for the subtle suggestions of the Pharisees and Sadducees—the Sacerdotalists and Rationalists of that day.

There is not here the least intention to disparage, in any way, a true scholarship, that is always humble, devout, and reverent in its treatment of God's Word. But we cannot forget, that many front-rank, philosophic scholars of these days are not any better than brilliant infidels. Such can never understand the deep things of God, for spiritual things can only be discerned by the spiritual. Let those, who will, receive their boastful assumptions. But a plain, simple statement in the inspired Word is of more value to the child of God than ever can be a whole library of modernistic sophistry. It is the entrance of God's Word, only, that giveth light.

Christ Must Return From Heaven.

Therefore, even if some of the leaders of official Christendom now refuse to believe in the coming back again of our Lord from Heaven, the glorious event will not be thereby retarded. Their unsupported testimony against Divine Truth is of no value. That only is valuable to us, which is

declared by the Lord, and His inspired disciples. And when we turn to the sacred writings, we find the statements concerning the Second Advent of Christ are so numerous and so peculiarly simple than even a babe might well receive them. Surely that is as it should be. The message is so important. It is from God.

Now the first discovery we make is, that in the New Testament alone, there are nearly four hundred references to the Second Coming of our Lord. It would be an easy matter to take up a whole chapter with what the Scriptures say about this stupendous event, and the God-given Signs of the Times concerning when it is likely to happen. And after such definite Bible statements, who will dare to say that we cannot understand what they teach regarding Christ's return? Listen! The Apostle Peter tells of his wonderful experience, when he saw pictured there, on the Mount of Transfiguration, the future glory of His Lord. That event, to him, was a sufficient testimony of Christ's ultimate triumph. But he refers to something of even greater value to us all, when he writes concerning the same theme: "We have a more sure word of prophecy whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time, by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." (2 Pet., i., 19.)

That is all we need. There is a sure word of prophecy. To that sure word we are all exhorted to take heed. The scholars and the priests are really not needed. The sure word is from God. O, my brethren, take heed to that word. It is the only safe anchorage for your soul, and mine.

And when we learn what is stated, in the "sure word of prophecy," about Christ's Second Advent, and the end of this present age, what is it we find? Therein we have the Lord Himself repeatedly assuring us that He will return again, and for our preparation, giving quite detailed descriptions of the precise condition of the whole world, at the time in which He is to return.

Something definite must now be said with every possible emphasis. It is this. If the Bible does not teach that the

Lord Himself will descend from Heaven to receive His own people, and to judge and to reign over this old world, then it cannot ever be said to teach anything. Nothing else is more persistently taught throughout the Scripture than is the coming again of Christ. We will select just a few out of the many plain, simple announcements concerning the great event. And if these sayings do not teach the actual, literal, personal and visible return of God's only Son, back to this world, then whatever else can they be said to teach?

Let us first hearken to the words that fell from the lips of our Divine Lord. And let us, also, for the moment, imagine that we are standing nearby as they are first spoken. What is this He says?

"**I will come again** and receive you unto Myself, that where I am, there ye may be also."

"**They shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven**, with power and great glory."

He also declares how suddenly the event is to happen—"As the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also **the coming of the Son of Man** be."

The terrible condition of the world at the time of the Second Advent is plainly stated. "As the days of Noah were, so shall also **the coming of the Son of Man** be."

Now we listen to the heaven-sent men in white, as they gave the Divine message to the astonished disciples, who, with uplifted gaze, were still watching the exact spot in the clouds where they had seen their Lord disappear at His ascension. "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into Heaven, **shall so come in like manner** as ye have seen Him go into Heaven."

The Apostle Paul shows the same thing when he reminded his converts that they had "turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; **and to wait for His Son from Heaven.**"

"**For the Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven** with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

We may not now give any more of such Bible testimony; but, let me ask you, Are the Scriptures thus given not sufficient to convince any reasonable person of the fact in regard to the personal return of our Lord and Saviour? Is it not here, clearly and simply shown, that Jesus Christ is personally and actually coming back again into this old world?

And we must not forget, that very many of those who now deny the Second Advent of Christ, deny also the integrity and authority of almost the whole Bible. The Modernists really make the Book to be one huge lie. The Virgin birth, God in Christ becoming sin for men, the statements of miracles in the Scriptures, such as the turning of water into wine, Christ walking on the sea, and casting out demons, etc., are to them nothing more or less than fiction, that is told to please a credulous, unlearned generation, but of no value to a progressive and enlightened twentieth century.

O, ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky, but ye cannot discern the Signs of the Times. To you with your much vaunted, accumulated results of modern knowledge, the notion that there should be any actual, personal return of Christ may seem to you only a matter for scoffing, but regenerate souls will prefer always the testimony of our Lord and His holy, inspired Apostles, to yours. We know our Lord will return. And as we partake of the sacred emblems, at the table of our Lord, we shall still go on saying, what we have always said, ever since He went away. "For as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till He come."

Christians Should Know About When.

Furthermore, when the Lord returns, His people are expected to be ready to receive Him. They are not to be taken unawares, by the startling suddenness of the mighty event. What else can such a Scripture as the following mean? "For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and Safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. BUT YE, BRETHREN, ARE NOT IN DARKNESS, THAT THAT DAY SHOULD OVERTAKE

YOU AS A THIEF." (1 Thess., v., 2.) That surely implies that no child of God should be in complete ignorance as to the imminence of the wonderful happening and be taken unawares when the Lord actually returns.

Such also is the unmistakable testimony of the oft-repeated injunction given by our Lord Himself:

"Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of Man cometh." (Matt., 25, 13.)

"Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh." "Blessed is that servant whom his Lord when He cometh shall find so doing." (Matt., 24: 44, 46.) There is clearly some significance in the frequent use of the words, "Ye know not the day nor the hour." And so often is this phrase, "day or hour," which they cannot know, used, that it plainly suggests, by implication, that there is something they may know. And that is the approximate time, though not the actual day or hour, when Christ is to return. One of our Lord's sayings confirms this very suggestion. It was made, when He was teaching that His people should be as able to read the Signs of the Times when He is to return, as should have been the official leaders of religion when He came the first time. It is the coming of the Son of Man in power and glory He is teaching, and He says:

"Learn a parable of the fig tree. When her branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is near; so ye in like manner, when ye shall see these things come to pass, KNOW THAT HE IS NIGH, EVEN AT THE DOORS." (Mark, 13: 28, 29). So, then, we are to see things happening, that are to indicate the fact, that the Second Advent is so near, that we shall be able to say that, "He is nigh, even at the doors."

And the things, to be then happening, are the Signs of the Times from which, if we do not discern and learn the fact of the near return of our Lord, we shall certainly be as worthy of condemnation as were the Scribes and Pharisees, who were so severely challenged for not doing this very thing. Therefore, in the light of this plain, unmistakable message from God's Word, I ask you, with me, to study in these dark, ominous days, and to consider well the Signs of the Times in which we are living. I am firmly persuaded

that we shall find that there is startling harmony, between the circumstances of these times now, and the happenings of the times, in which the Lord has said He will come. In the present chapter, we can only hurriedly glance at some of the signs given to indicate the close of this present age, as foretold in the sacred Word.

Is The World To Grow Better?

In the chapters which are to follow, we shall learn how the things prophesied are actually taking place before our eyes now, whether or not we are able to see them. We shall also plainly discern how absolutely contrary, those Bible signs of the times for the close of the age are, to the teaching of many modern preachers.

To illustrate what I mean, an illustration from the days of the recent World War may be of value. At first, many of the preachers, who had been looking for a man-made Millennium, were greatly shocked by the fearful horror and tragedy of the war. Their entirely unscriptural theories had been completely shattered. The gospel of the Brotherhood of Man had surely gone to pieces. Then came a rallying. The pulpit would justify its earlier philosophy. The Great War had to come, as a war to end all war, so that when the fearful struggle came to a close, there would be seen the setting up of an entirely new order of things.

At this time, I was greatly interested in reading an account of two sermons, preached the same day, in London, England. The preachers were eloquent men, held in highest esteem. Both have since passed into the eternal, and now, undoubtedly, know better. So also do we, who are still on this side. For a number of years have already slipped away, since the close of the Great War, and time is the acid test of every man-made theory. With the passing of the years, has the entirely unscriptural optimism of these two eloquent old preachers, in regard to the permanent results to come out of the Great War, been at all justified?

The late Dr. John Hunter was the morning preacher. His topic was "The Coming Reign of Peace," in which he said: "The vision of a world, redeemed from hatred and strife, in which should dwell universal brotherhood and peace, had haunted the noblest of men from quite early

times. And the day is hastening when wisdom and justice and mercy will take the place of strife, and international tribunals be substituted for war."

On the evening of the same day, the other gifted preacher, Dr. John Clifford, had for his subject, "The New World After the War." He claimed that: "After the war there would be a new world; it could not be the same. Already evolutionary and revolutionary elements were at work." In his own eloquent and telling way, Dr. Clifford went on to show his hope and faith as to that new world. "(1) It would be a world without war, and that because of the utterly unimaginable revelation humanity had had as to what war might mean and did mean. So brutal and diabolical a method of settling human difficulties and disputes would have to pass. (2) There would be a fresh attitude towards sobriety. For seventy-five years temperance reformers had been proclaiming the danger and deadliness of alcoholic liquors, and for their pains had been called fanatics or worse. Now that danger and deadliness was realised everywhere. (3) There would be an increase of individual freedom, because of the overthrow of the doctrines of the divine right of kings and the deification of the State. These doctrines, which, by their acceptance and prevalence in Germany, had wrought untold mischief, were doomed to disappear, and the individual would thereby come more into his own. (4) There would be an increase of brotherhood amongst the separated tribes and families of men. Already the war had brought about a solidarity of the British Empire such as had never been known, and that was an example and a promise of a wider solidarity still."

The Bible Says No.

Now, such beautifully expressed aspirations did very great credit to the benevolence of their hopes for the world's good, on the part of these two veteran preachers, yet it must be recognised that the things they said were entirely without any Scriptural basis. The Bible certainly foretells a good time coming for the world. But, before that happens, it is inevitable that our Lord must return. The different nations of the earth can never be bound together in any

true universal brotherhood, until Christ reigns over them with a rod of iron. Nor can we quite forget that, until recently, preachers of this school frequently told us that never again would there be a great European war. The increase of human knowledge, and an advanced civilisation, was going to make so dreaded a tragedy impossible. Such doctrine was being steadily taught, while, all the time, we knew the great nations were feverishly spending vast moneys and bringing every available scientific achievement into service, and training millions of men in preparation for the stupendous war, that seemed, even by ordinary people, to be inevitable. And then, when the awful thing came upon us, and involved almost every nation of the world in the grim cataclysm, and when fearful passions and bitterest animosities were aroused that will take long years to subside, we were being told that the result of it all was to be the development of only lovely things, such as peace, sobriety, chaste living, and universal brotherhood. Now the Great War has been ended more than ten years, and what sign is there in any portion of the earth of the possible realisation of any of these good aspirations from out of the awful tragedy? Knowing a little of the shocking immoralities and the stark, glaring vice rampant in all the war-stricken countries, one can only wonder that preachers can now be found to utter such inane nonsense. Listen to the Lord God through the prophet Jeremiah: "In the latter days ye shall consider it perfectly; I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran; I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied. But if they had stood in My counsel, and had caused My people to hear My words, then they should have turned them from their evil way, and from the evil of their doings" (Jer., 23:20).

But, remember, Scripture nowhere encourages such sweet hopes for the world during this age. According to its universal testimony, the world will be a long way worse before it can be better. Before ever there can be a blessed Millennium for humanity, the King must come, and before He comes, there is to be a fearful culmination of evil, such as the world has never before known. When He went away, the Lord Himself clearly foretold how that, during His absence, in spite of the preaching of the gospel and the activi-

ties of the Church, the whole world would go on preparing for war, ultimately on such a scale would it be as never before was dreamed of by men. Nation rising against nation, kingdom against kingdom, wars and rumors of wars everywhere. The Apostle John gave the final description of the end of the age, testifying that the spirit of war should pervade the whole earth, and at last assemble the nations together for one last grim, awful culminating struggle.

Then we find another statement, in the sure word of prophecy, which is right out of harmony with certain claims of modern preaching. It had been loudly asserted that the Church was winning victories all along the line, and that the forces of darkness were being swiftly vanquished. Any man who ventured to express his suspicions concerning the soundness of such doctrine, was branded by his fellows as being a miserable pessimist. Yet all through the Scriptures, it is steadfastly declared, that the end of our age is not to be thus, a glory of radiant hues, but is rather to be heavy and louring with clouds of fearful judgment. At the end, there is to be an appalling spiritual apostasy, in regard to true religion. False teachers, false prophets, and even false Christs are to abound. God's Word is written that we may know all such matters, beforehand.

Universal Signs.

Men will be lovers of pleasure, rather than lovers of God. And because the people will not believe the truth, they will receive strong delusion, and believe the greatest lie of all history. Wicked men shall wax worse and worse. And even in the name of religion, multitudes shall be carried into fearful excesses.

In the last days, professing Christians will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers; having itching ears, and be turned unto fables. Scoffers will blatantly ask, Where is the promise of His coming? We shall see in the following chapters, that all these things are now being fulfilled.

Then, also, there are given us clearly defined predictions of developments in connection with the nations, which were also to indicate the near return of Christ. Thus we shall be able to study, in relation to the time of the end,

the present position of the Jewish nation; Russia, the kingdom of the North; strange developments, in regard to Turkey; Great Britain, as the modern representative of ancient Tarshish; Egypt, the land of mystery; also Babylon, Persia, Greece, and other mighty nations.

We shall likewise learn, that the great social and political upheavals of these dark days are all in precise harmony with Divine prophecy. Also, shall we see it, that the present social and moral tendencies of humanity, and the remarkable scientific developments of our brilliant age, give overpowering testimony of the fact in regard to the probable near return of the Blessed Lord. All these things are literally happening, as declared in God's Word. And all of them declare the solemn, wonderful, inevitable fact, the possible soon coming of Christ from Heaven.

An Urgent Appeal.

In closing this chapter, I am impelled to send out an urgent appeal to the Lord's own believing people.

"Ye brethren are not in darkness that that day should overtake you as a thief." Therefore, knowing the time, and seeing the day approaching, it certainly behoves us to be ready, and to be as men that watch for the return of the Master. "Watch, therefore, for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come."

And what earnest word can be spoken to any who are not yet reconciled to God?

Such are at present being called by the Gospel to a feast, a marriage supper; but, remember, when once the Master of the house rises up, He will shut to the door, and for those who will then be shut out, there will be nothing but a certain fearful-looking-for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversary. In that outer darkness will be weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth.

Oh, it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God for judgment. Repent from your sins at once. Kiss the Son, lest He be angry. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved. Do it now, for there is no time to be lost, and now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation.

CHAPTER II.

The Sign of Religion.

"Take heed that no man deceive you."—(Matt., 24-4.)

The whole of this book has to do with Signs of the Times that were Divinely given, to show when the promised coming again of Jesus Christ to this world is to be near at hand. Such signs, so clearly stated, can have only one purpose in view. It is that those for whom they are given may have the clearest possible understanding as to the time when the great event is likely to happen. "When ye shall see all these things, know that He is near, even at the doors." (Matt., 24-33.) "And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." (Luke, 21-28.) These words, and many others as well, were spoken by the Lord. And their intention is quite clear. It is that every true Christian may know about when, and also be ready to go away with Him when Christ comes to the world a second time. There is no room for mistake here. Things, that are clearly specified, are then going to be seen. By these things Christian people are then to know that the coming again of their Lord is likely to happen at any day or hour. At His first coming, not many were ready to receive Him. He came unto His own, but His own received Him not. Why? It was simply because they did not discern the signs of the times. They were stone blind to all of such things. For they were then accepting the traditions of men rather than the things plainly and distinctly recorded in the Word of God. Already have we prayerfully considered, in this connection, the Lord's stern denunciation of the official religious leaders among the Jews. "O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times?"

What did that mean? Surely, that they could very well have known the time of the first coming of the Lord to this world as easily as they were able to forecast the weather by signs in the sky. They were denounced as hypocrites, only because they professed to teach the Scriptures, but gave the people something else. And in regard to the second coming of Christ to this world, our Lord shows His own true people that it is going to be the same all over again. "When the Son of man comes shall He find faith on the earth?" We are actually told, in regard to ultimate Christendom, that, "there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of His coming?" While our Lord, after telling us of the blessedness that will then be, for the servant who will be found watching when his Lord shall come, goes on to tell of the evil servant, who shall be saying in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming. Regarding such unfaithful servant, our blessed Master said: "The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth." God save us in the end time from that awful Divine judgment! And, may every reader of these words be found then among those, concerning whom it is said: the Lord, the righteous Judge, at that day, shall give unto all them that love His appearing a crown of righteousness! For, "Unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation."

The Divine instruction for all true Christians, in regard to our Lord's coming, is ever and only always the same; "Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come." "For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch. Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the Master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. AND WHAT I SAY UNTO YOU I SAY UNTO ALL, WATCH."

All of that is concerning the coming again of the Lord, and it is to be found written in the fourteenth chapter of the Gospel according to Mark.

Mistaken Watchers.

Now, in this same connection, we are often reminded, by those who seek to persuade Christian people that there is no need now to watch the signs of the times, in regard to the coming again of Christ, that there were others before us who had thought the Lord was coming in their time, only to be disappointed. The thing is quite true, but there is surely to be noted a significant circumstance in regard to it. And this is, that there always have been Christian men and women, so loyal to the Divine instruction that they earnestly watched for the return of the Lord. Even in Apostolic days, the Apostle Paul could write of such; "But ye brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief." "Therefore let us not sleep as do others; but let us watch and be sober." And, like them, we also, are just as clearly told to watch. That should be for us all that is needed. If the earlier Christians began to watch for their Lord's return, because they were instructed so to do, is it not now the more necessary for us to watch, seeing we are nineteen hundred years nearer the event for which every follower of Christ is so constantly commanded to look for? And we now are also greatly advantaged over all the other watchers that were before us. And this is, in regard to one distinct feature of the Divine instruction. What the Lord said was: "When ye shall see ALL these things, know that He is near." That is surely definite enough for anything. It was not to be when some of the things would be coming to pass, they were to know. It was only, when ALL the things so clearly foretold were to be seen, that they would know that He was soon to come back again.

Here then is a matter of the utmost possible importance in regard to the great event for which every Christian was commanded to watch. Not any of the Christians before us were ever able to see all of the things, foretold by the Lord, as we now can see them. They could surely discern some of these things, but not all of them. For instance.

chief among the things, that were to be watched, had to do with the Fig Tree that was to be seen, when the Second Advent would be at hand, putting forth leaves. This budding of the Fig Tree is simply the symbolic expression in regard to the restoration of the Jewish people to Palestine, from which land our Lord said they would be banished until the Times of the Gentiles were fulfilled. It is only in our day, and never before, that the Jews are being seen going back to the Holy Land. For, until quite recently, no Jew was ever allowed to own even a foot of the sacred country. Thus, the earlier watchers might have been able to see some of the things our Lord spoke about, but not all of them. And it could never have been more than the earlier beginnings of some of the other things they were ever able to behold. But we now can surely see the fuller development in regard to everything, that so solemnly affected the earlier generations of watchers. How much greater the need on our part, then, for us to be instant in season and out of season, in our looking for the return of our Lord.

The Swinging Pendulum.

It is as if there were some great pendulum slowly swinging back and forth, and operated by a power that swings right out each time over a wider area than before, until it finally swings clear of its case. Hundreds of years ago, God's pendulum of the signs of the times surely swung over to the side of the last days, and the watching ones thought they were then entering the perilous times. But the pendulum swung back, and the last days did not come. Again and again has the pendulum swung over to the dark side, each time going further, and giving the saints increased reason to believe they were reaching the end of the dispensation.

Yet each time had it swung back. But now, in our day, the pendulum has again been swinging over. It has already passed all previous marks, and it shows no sign of slowing down. At last nothing seems to be wanting to fill out the prophetic picture of the beginning of the dark days that are to usher in the Advent of Christ. We shall see how that, as the mariner learns his location by consulting

the signs of the stars above him, so we can learn our position in relation to the end, by studying the signs of the times all around us.

All these signs are converging, and convince us that the time before the coming of Christ and the end of our age is now alarmingly short. At the very least we are in the dark shadow of the blackness in which the age is to close.

The Religious Sign.

The religious sign is the first to have our consideration now, because there is not anything of a greater importance to any one of us than that which has to do with religion. However the question may sometimes be shirked, religion has to be recognised as being the biggest thing in all human experience. No matter what our position in life is there can be nothing of a more vital interest to anyone. For religion has to do with God, and the soul, and vitally relates to the eternal destiny of every being. Whatever our position or condition here, it is the eternal hereafter that lies ahead of all. And "the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." So "what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

Now, there are really only two kinds of religion in the world. The one is good, the other is bad. There is plenty of variety in regard to each, but all religion is either the one or the other—good or bad. Religion is only good as it provides for us a sure basis of salvation, brings us right to God and is able to give us a positive assurance of a place among the redeemed in Heaven. No matter by what name it is called, the religion that cannot do these things for mankind is essentially bad.

How Can We Tell?

The question is now all-important. How can we be sure that our religion will lead us to God and therefore into eternal salvation? That brings us right up against the question of authority. For there must be an absolute standard of authority in regard to religion. Otherwise, how can we know? And our standard of authority must be

entirely sufficient to meet our every religious need. Its validity must be unquestioned. The least suggestion of suspicion or doubt in regard to it, and our confidence is gone.

Now, it is that absolute standard of authority that is given us in the Bible, when the blessed Book is seen to be, as it claims to be, the very Word of God. For it is God, alone, Who can give us unquestioned assurance in regard to religion. Suspect the Bible of being anything else but the exact expression of the mind and purpose of God and its validity and essential authority in regard to religion is for ever destroyed. No priest, no combination of priests, no church, nor anything else whatever, can give to the human race a positive assurance in regard to the great things of God, the unseen, and the eternal. It is only the Bible that can do it. And that only, because the Bible is the very Word of God. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God." About the men who wrote the blessed Book, we are told that they were holy men of God, who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. Thousands of times, in the Old Testament, the prophets tell us they only spake the word of God, as that word of God came to them. They were thus able to foretell human conditions, as they would be seen in the world, right down to the end of all time. Millenniums afterwards, we now can see it how right they were, down to the very last jot and tittle. That is one reason why we know the prophets spake as they were moved by God, for God only knows the end of all things from the beginning. We can only therefore receive the Bible as the all-sufficient and only reliable standard of authority in regard to religion. "These are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His Name." (John, 20-31.)

False Religion to Triumph.

Here surely is a most terrible feature in regard to all human experience. It is that false religion in the world has always been more successful than has been good religion. That is an appalling certainty. The larger nations have been, and are, chiefly heathen. Occasionally, in the world,

true religion has only had a handful of adherents. Not at any time has it ever had a great number. It was the Lord Who said how that, "Wide is the gate and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that go in thereat." That is a very terrible saying, but more terrible still is it for us to learn, on the highest possible authority, that in the time of the end, after long centuries of Gospel ministry, it is false religion and a false Christ that will come to have ascendancy all over the world. A brief survey of the Scriptures here, will be quite sufficient for us to know that such is to be the ultimate awful condition. It is that, which only is the teaching of the Bible. Those who teach anything different, no matter who they are, are themselves false teachers. For they are not teaching the same things as the Lord and the holy apostles taught in regard to the last days. The facts are always plainly stated. We need not that any man should teach us. The Bible is at every man's hand. We only have to read for ourselves, and we are as wise as the wisest. "These things are written that ye may know."

The Last Days According to the Lord.

When the disciples learned that Jerusalem was to be destroyed, and that the Jews would be scattered among the nations and that their Lord was to go away from them and not to return for a long time, there were certain things they earnestly desired to know. "And as He sat upon the Mount of Olives, the disciples came unto Him privately, saying, Tell us when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the Age?" To these three distinct questions, the answer of the Lord was clear for anything. It was the religious condition that had first mention. The disciples wanted to know the sign of His coming again. The answer given, plainly indicates that the sign was to be chiefly religious. It was by a final appalling religious apostasy that Christian people would be able to know that the time of their Lord's return would be near at hand.

"Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many."

These were the first words of the Lord in regard to religious conditions that would ultimately lead on to the time of the Second Advent, as made known in Matthew 24. And all through the discourse which followed, it is specifically the religious condition, in connection with the great event, that has repeated mention.

"And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold." (Vs., 11, 12.) Again: "Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Behold, I have told you before. Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold He is in the desert; go not forth: behold, He is in the secret chambers; believe it not."

Now, what is said is all unmistakably clear and is also very definite too. The Lord's warning is that we take heed that we are not deceived, especially as the time of His return draws near. For, false prophets and false Christs are to arise and many are to be deceived. So deceitful are to be the many religious cults, then to arise, that even the very elect would be deceived by them, could such a thing be deemed possible. And so widespread is to be the iniquity of the Last Days, that the love of even God's own people will grow cold. Not only will there be signs and wonders to deceive unwatchful souls, but invitations will be under offer for men and women to enter secret places, where it will be claimed, Christ is giving special manifestations. It is startling to know that modern Spiritualism makes such solicitation now.

In a parable, the Lord also tells how, while He sowed good seed, the Devil sowed bad seed and both are to grow up together until the harvest, which is the end of this Gospel Age.

Again He tells of a woman taking leaven and corrupting the whole truth of God with it, until the whole is affected.

Christ also used two great tragic events of past history to make prophecy as to how this Gospel Age is going to end. He said that "As it was in the days of Noah, so shall

it be when the Son of God shall come." And, He also affirmed it, how that "As it was in the days of Lot, so shall it be when the Son of man shall come." And it was also concerning the same time precisely, He asked the question: "When the Son of man cometh, shall He find the faith upon the earth?" While the Divine description of the end time speaks always, only of awful catastrophe. "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened." (Matt., 24, 21.)

Not in any of our Lord's sayings is it ever suggested that through any process of evolution, or other improving condition, is this world to enter widespread righteousness and peace. Very many preachers are now saying that it is in some such way that world righteousness is coming. They are therefore the false prophets, about whom it is written, that they say, Peace, peace when there is no peace. This is a very strong saying, but it has to be said of every preacher, whose teaching now, is different to that of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Holy Apostles and the Last Days.

The description of the end, as given by the Apostles, is always the same as that given by the Lord. From them there is not ever the least suggestion, that the Gospel they preached, was yet to be received by the whole world. It is only always exactly the reverse. And here is to be clearly seen the startling contrast between much modern preaching and that of the Apostles, as it likewise is to that of the Lord. Either modern preaching is wrong, or the inspired writings are false and unreliable. Are we to believe what God has caused to be written, concerning the last days, or shall we believe those who now unashamedly deny every essential element of Divine Truth? At anyrate, the inspired account of Christendom in all its historic unfolding is seen, in all Apostolic writing, to be one of increasing wickedness and spiritual apostasy.

At Ephesus, the Apostle Paul could only say to the weeping elders: "After my departing shall grievous wolves enter

in among you, not sparing the flock: also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." (Acts 20-29.)

That was how spiritual conditions would develop, even in Apostolic days, but what was to be in the end, when Gospel ministry would soon be to close, was to be more terrible still. The Day of the Lord was not to come in before there would be, in regard to Christianity, the most appalling apostasy of all time. The Mystery of Iniquity was even then at work, and would continue through to the end. Of that awful religious condition, the Apostle plainly wrote, "Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that Man of sin be revealed, the Son of perdition.

This Man of sin is the one, "Whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the Truth that they might be saved."

Now, my reader, what do you really think of all that? It is the actual Apostolic description of how this Age is to close. There is nothing here whatever about evolution, or of the universal acceptance of the Gospel, as modern preachers now are seeking to make people believe is going to be. Nor is there either, in any part of God's Word, one single expression to justify such appalling, unscriptural optimism, as many preachers, now cheerfully advocate.

More Astonishing Still.

Last day religious conditions are to be more awful still. "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall give heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils." (1 Tim., 4-1.)

Again in [redacted] Tim., 1-5, is given us a most precise description of the terrible, general spiritual conditions, that are foretold will be, in Christianity's closing days. "This know also that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that

are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having the form of godliness but denying the power thereof."

In the same chapter also, the apostle declares how that, "evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived." And then is given a really amazing description of how the final apostasy is to ultimately develop. In the light of modern religious tendencies, and of historic Christian experience back of everything, there is here

A Most Startling Description

of how Christendom has come to be as it now is in this generation of ours. What the Apostle dreaded for Timothy is the same, in precise detail, as has happened generally in connection with modern religion. Very tender is the Apostolic entreaty. "Continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them."

Now, looking back into the first chapter of this second epistle of Timothy, we there learn that his faith had come to him as an inheritance from his grandmother Lois and from his mother Eunice. That is, the kind of religion Paul desired Timothy, the young preacher, to continue on with, was of the same kind as that of his mother and grandmother. From them he had so learned the Gospel, that he had become fully assured as to its reality. Timothy's faith was as the faith of a child, and it was in regard to that same, simple, childlike faith, in the sweet reality of which, Paul would have Timothy continue, grown up man though he now was. It was the religion of his mother, and of his grandmother, the young preacher was entreated to retain. And there is surely a peculiar significance about the Apostolic appeal, in regard to the kind of thing now being said in modern preaching. And this is to the effect, that the old standards of faith may have been good enough for earlier generations, but that this more enlightened age of ours demands something more advanced. So, that now, almost every distinctive truth for which Christianity stands, is being openly, and unblushingly denied, and often is really made the subject of profane scoffing and silly jest.

The Virgin birth of our Lord, the Deity of Christ, His Substitutionary Sacrifice, the Atonement for a world's sin, Eternal Punishment, the Second Advent, and every other vital Bible doctrine, once deemed essential by our fathers and mothers, are now being contemptuously rejected by many of our modern preachers. No educated person is now supposed to believe the Bible to be the inspired Word of God. To hold the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures is really to lay one's self open to the charge of being intellectually deficient. Such is, indeed, the actual general condition of things throughout Christendom to-day. But here is surely a most remarkable circumstance. The further away this generation is going from the faith of their fathers and mothers the more terrible are the moral conditions that are everywhere developing. The recognition of God is going out of human experience, with the natural consequence that the parental bond and all magisterial authority is being pushed aside.

The perilous times of the last days are now surely here. Selfishness, coveting, boasting, pride, blasphemy, parental disobedience, unthankfulness, unholiness, unnatural affections, truce-breaking, lying, incontinency, fierceness, the despising of goodness, headiness, high-mindedness, the loving of pleasure more than the loving of God, the appearance of godliness, without the least recognition of the Holy Ghost, Who, in regeneration, is the power of all true godliness, are all to be seen everywhere. The inspired Apostle said, that in the last days such things were to come, and they are all here. The perilous times have come. Humanity is now in the rapids. What is to be done?

Salvation and the Scriptures.

In the same Scripture, Paul showed Timothy the vital connection between salvation and the Scriptures. He wrote: "That from a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."

The Scriptures are here, by the Apostle, called holy. Why? No other writings, can be called holy writings. Why? Because, in a sense, never seen in anything else, the Bible is the very inspired word of God. And, as the Apostle goes on to say: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for

instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." It is therefore the Bible alone, that is able to make us wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. There is no other source of information, regarding eternal salvation, available for lost humanity, outside of the Holy Scriptures. So that the professed Christian teacher who now discredits the supreme authority of the Bible as the very Word of God, is really imperilling the souls of the people. Such false prophets are surely sapping the foundation of all essential authority in regard to true religion.

Preaching the Word.

How tremendously earnest the Apostle is seen to be, in regard to the preaching of the Word! "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, Who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His Kingdom; preach the Word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine."

This solemn charge is evidently then given, in view of the coming again of the Lord. He is to judge the quick, that is the regenerate, at His appearing. He is to judge the dead, the unregenerate, at the Great White Throne, in connection with His kingdom. It is thus in the light of these solemn certainties, the true servant of Christ is to preach. What? The Word. It is that Word that is profitable for doctrine, as well as for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect.

There is much preaching that is not preaching the Word. There may be a text in connection with the sermon, and yet the Word may not be preached. The Word means the Bible and it is the Bible that has to be preached, or else the people are not being instructed. And "For lack of knowledge the people perish." How terribly in earnest is the Apostle seen to be, in regard to what should be preached! And he gives the reason for his earnestness.

"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the Truth, and shall be turned unto fables."

That such a terrible condition is now right here, will surely be admitted. The startling delusions and the astonishing religious deceptions that are everywhere fascinating and demoralising the world are certainly most bewildering in their amazing variety. New religious cults are coming into being all over the earth, and all of them, no matter the absurdity of their claim, can now have a definite following. Many people are leaving the Churches, only to become the eager supporters of the most astonishing of fables. And here, in this connection, is surely to be seen another very remarkable circumstance. It is, that the Churches do not really seem to mind so very much the appalling exodus that is going on towards these new religions. It is now assumed somehow, that one religion is quite as good as another. We are all going the same way and shall all eventually reach God. To be dogmatic now, in regard to religion is to be uncharitable. And many of the preachers are very much kinder to the teachers of false religion than they are to those who are seeking to be faithful to the Holy Scriptures, that, according to the Apostle Paul, are alone able to make men wise unto salvation.

But, we have seen it plainly affirmed, that it is just such a condition of religious apostasy, that is to characterise the very close of our Gospel Age. Sometimes we hear of modern preachers, who suggest that it was only the Apostle Paul who spoke thus of the Last Days. But, all through the Scriptures, there is only the same description of awful religious conditions, at the time when the Coming of the Lord is to be near. The Apostle Peter gives us precisely the same testimony.

"But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the Way of Truth shall be evil spoken of. . . . Knowing this first, that there shall come in the Last Days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying where is the promise of His Coming?"

The teaching of John is only the same: "Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that Antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby ye know it is the Last Time."

If we continued through into the Book of Revelation, we should there find that the last state of Christendom is to be that of the Laodicean condition, rich and increased with goods, but wretched, and poor and miserable, and blind, and naked, with only enough warmth to be spued out of the mouth of the Coming Lord.

After thus looking at such Scripture statements, concerning religious conditions to be in the closing days of this Age, there is surely a sufficient justification for my earlier suggestion, that the religious sign should be for us of absolute primary significance in regard to the near Coming of our Lord from Heaven.

Fables of the Last Days.

We have seen it, how that many people in the Last Days, are to turn away their ears from the Truth and are to be turned unto fables. The turning away from the Truth is to be voluntary. Professed Christians are to turn away their ears from the Truth; they themselves shall be turned. How? The turning unto fables is to be involuntary. Because they will not receive the love of the Truth that they may be saved, it is written that for this cause God shall send them strong delusion. And it is only because we can now see all around us in Christendom the widespread acceptance of the most astonishing of religious fables, that humble Christian people cannot help but realise, that the coming again of their Lord is surely drawing very near. He it was, Who said it: "When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh."

Even just a brief consideration of only a few of the amazing things, now being accepted in the name of religion, should make us to realise about where we are in regard to the Coming again of the Lord Jesus Christ to this old world. And first among the last day fables, we shall briefly consider the theory of

Evolution.

Perhaps there is nothing in our day that has brought about more calamitous effect in regard to the Christian Faith, than has the theory of evolution. It is not real science, but only an assumption, yet it has really shaken the Christian Church to its very foundations. And really the bewildering thing, in regard to evolution is, that the outstanding preachers are the men that have made this most astonishing theory popular. Schools, Colleges, Universities, Theological Halls have all come to look upon the acceptance of evolution as the high water mark of learning. The evolution assumption is right against every Bible doctrine. Its great exponents were all unbelievers. Darwin was an agnostic; Spencer was a sceptic; Huxley was an agnostic, and Haeckel an infidel. To all such men, the Christian faith was a "superstition" and its acceptance "stupidity." Haeckel could write that "Never will our government improve until it casts off the fetters of the Church." Atheism and evolution are now seen to be the outstanding elements of that Communistic theory of government, which now threatens to wreck all civilisation. Evolution has certainly made more unbelievers than anything else, since the beginning of Christianity. The amazing thing about the theory is that it has no real scientific basis. Prof. Everett of Harvard said: "Evolution, or this story of transformation and activity is a dream." Prof. Agassiz, as a paleontologist, wrote: "I am compelled to say that the theory is a scientific mistake, untrue in its facts, unscientific in its methods and mischievous in its tendency." President Leavitt affirmed that: "All the facts of the past cycles of the earth are against Darwinism." Sir William Dawson wrote that: "The records of the rocks is decidedly against evolution." Dr. Etheridge of the British Museum also affirmed that: "In this great Museum there is not a particle of evidence of the transmutation of species. The talk of evolutionists is sheer nonsense, not supported by facts." Even Haeckel, before he died, had to admit that, "Most modern investigators of science have come to the conclusion that the doctrine of evolution, and particularly Darwinism, is an error and cannot be maintained."

Then, as already mentioned, evolution is right against everything for which the Bible stands. Because of their acceptance of this outrageous theory, many preachers have come to reject the creation account, given in Genesis, and now hold that there has been no Fall and, therefore, no need for the Divine atonement for sin. That position completely destroys faith in the Incarnation and also perverts the understanding of humanity in regard to God, and ultimately leads to agnosticism, or even to atheism. Not one, real, vital proof has ever been known for evolution. Every archaeological discovery is always against it. Never in all history has one species been known to change into something else. Evolution only leads to doubt, in regard to every fundamental principle of the Christian faith, yet is the world now presented with the startling phenomenon; that is, Christian preachers receiving a theory, which our scientist calls sheer nonsense, instead of the Truth God gave them. Is this not, what the Apostle said would be in the last days. "They shall turn away their ears from the Truth and shall be turned unto fables."

Spiritualism.

This is another of the Last Time, Divinely given, signs. For "the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall give heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils."

This is the most remarkable of these daring, latter-day assaults upon the souls of men. The rapid development of this bewildering delusion has been most astonishing. In its modern form, it is only some eighty years since it was introduced to the world by the spirit-rappings of the Fox sisters. So intense was the excitement raised then, and so deep the interest awakened by the astounding discovery that communication might be obtained with the unseen world, that within twenty years, the movement was said to have gained about twenty million adherents in America alone. And it has not slackened off since then, but has spread itself into every land, until there are said to be about sixty million believers in the tenets of Spiritualism in the world to-day. Personal investigation has completely convinced me of the sincerity of those who haunt the seance room. And those who know anything of this cult know that it is not generally

the illiterate and ignorant that give themselves over to this most amazing delusion. Great scholars and scientists, like Sir Oliver Lodge, Sir William Crookes, Alfred Russell Wallace, Camille Flammarian, and others of like ability, sincerely accept its claims. So do many who are prominent in literary circles, with brilliant novelists such as Conan Doyle in the lead. While many in the most exclusive society, even royal personages, are to be found in seance rooms, while the literature of Spiritualism is large and most varied and interesting in its character. Its journals and magazines are published everywhere.

How Spiritualism Grips the Soul.

Here is the case of Mr. John Lobb, a man of undoubted power and influence in London life. By persistent perseverance and keen resource he raised himself to a position of high commercial eminence. A member of many public bodies in the great metropolis, he became editor, and ultimately proprietor of the "Christian Age," a religious weekly paper, whose circulation he increased from 5000 to 80,000 copies. He was brought up in the Primitive Methodist Church, but has left it for ever, because, he says, he has now got hold of something better. Listen to his answers to the questions, "Do the dead come back? Is there communication between the Spirit world and this? Can they whose bodies are beneath the sod return to this earth and talk?" "Yes! Upwards of seven hundred of the so-called dead have returned at circles where I have sat during the past three years, many of whom have talked freely with the sitters, recalling incidents in their domestic, material, social, and public life, giving tangible and visible proof of their continued existence after death. Though our dear ones pass from our sight, we know they are not dead. We hear their voices, clasp their hands, and enjoy the same communion as of yore."

Spiritualists also believe that photographs of the spirits of departed friends can be had. Dr. Alfred Russell Wallace tells us that he carried out many tests in spirit photography and claims that spirit photographs are successfully taken, and cites instances where he himself has gone secretly to a photographer and obtained a most unmistakable likeness of

a deceased relative. Mr. John Lobb, in his book, "Talks With the Dead," gives what he claims to be some of such actual spirit photographs. Here is one, claimed to be the spirit of a beautiful woman, whose business in the spirit world, is said to be to look after little children. Here also is one of C. H. Spurgeon in the spirit world, and there are many others in the book. To show that this thing is attracting multitudes of people, I quote from Mr. Lobb's description of his work. He says, "Since my conversion to Spiritualism I have travelled over 18,000 miles, and addressed 40,000 persons. Some of the largest halls in the provinces have been too small to accommodate the crowds of anxious truth-seekers." This gentleman tells of holding conversations with his mother, who died thirty-eight years before, and how at a small circle in which he met, has known twenty-five spirits to materialise, and on some occasions five of these have been in the room at the same time, walking and talking to their friends. At other seances he has heard poured forth glorious music from heavenly orchestras, and materialised throats have poured forth the richest and most enchanting strains. While bright and happy spirits have appeared in long, shining robes, with girdles round the waist.

Sir Oliver Lodge.

This great scientist disbelieves all the essential and vital principles of the Christian faith. He is also an openly confessed Spiritualist. It is not so long ago that he announced to the world, that the wall dividing the seen from the unseen had now been broken down, and that he had been commissioned by the spirits to pioneer throughout England a campaign for intercourse with the dead. In his book, "Raymond," he tells how that his son, slain in battle, now has regular communication with all the members of his family. The drawing-room of the beautiful home of this master scientist has come to be used as a meeting-place for the dead with the living. The whole household in the evening gather round a ponderous table which dances about the room like a creature of life. The place is often reported to be crowded with disembodied spirits, who are said to be sorrowful because they desire to converse with friends on this side,

who have not yet come to realise the possibility of such a means of consolation. Hence the tremendous enthusiasm with which Professor Lodge has abandoned himself to the work of letting England's sorrowing ones know that their slain soldier heroes are not really dead, but were to be found waiting in the seance chambers to tell how exquisitely happy they now are.

Yet, notwithstanding his avowed spiritualistic propaganda, Sir Oliver is always a most popular speaker at the great denominational gatherings in England. Church people crowd to hear him. This surely is a clear sign as to how far official Christianity has departed from the Truth.

How the Net is Spread.

A devout Christian writer shows how it happens that even earnest souls may be affected by this deadly movement. She says: "But can God's children be affected by this spirit-stream? Listen. A Christian mother has lost a precious son, without one sign of his salvation. She finds herself night and day thinking, thinking about him. Oh, if she could only know if he is with the Lord. She is a believer in Christ as 'very God of very God,' and in His Blood as the God-provided atonement for the sins of the whole world, and is one who has known the Lord many years, but she cannot get rest from this apparently lawful grief which is gaining upon her. She tries to cast it all upon God, but in vain. Then in spite of her faith and her knowledge of truth according to the Scriptures, she finds herself at times praying for this son who is dead! The spirits of Satan are gaining influence upon her through her grief, and actually forcing prayers for the dead through her lips.

"Again, another good woman finds herself pressed down night and day with overwhelming longing for the presence of her mother, now safely with Christ; she feels herself scarcely able to restrain her tears as she struggles to push away this haunting memory, and even the sense of a 'presence' on one occasion like a shadow following her. One glimpse as to the real cause of this pressure, and it is gone."

These things clearly evidence the fact that hosts of spirit beings are now seeking to break right through into human experience, as the Scriptures have clearly shown they will do, as the Coming of our Lord draws near. That would

explain the craving that so many seem to have, to establish intercourse with the dead.

But there is something that never should be forgotten by every earnest reader of the Scriptures. Satan's business is to destroy souls, and his most successful method ever has been along the lines of simulation and substitution. Thus we find that every good thing in the world has a Satanic imitation. Each Divine truth always has had its counterfeit. A counterfeit has some degree of value as a testimony to the true. A counterfeit banknote implies the existence of a genuine banknote. And it is because there is one true, divine Christ, that there always have been and always will be many false Christs. It is because there is one perfect, true, divine way by which the souls of men can be saved, that Satan has introduced many dazzling imitations of the Divine plan of eternal salvation.

There is usually a modicum of truth in each of these devilish imitations to give it credibility. Yet the more truth it has the more dangerous it is. A silver coin may be gilded so that it looks like gold. The gilding does not affect the real value of the silver, but it enables a gross deception to be wrought on the unwary. Souls are first of all deceived by the measure of truth in which some false doctrine is presented, and then are eternally demoralised and for ever lost because the thing has no power to save.

Those who teach false religion, no matter how much of truth they may seem to hold, are doing the devil's work, and over them are impending some of God's most awful judgments. A simple illustration may now emphasize the crime of such perverters of Divine truth.

This incident happened a while ago in America. A train with two engines was ploughing over the prairies through a wintry storm. There was a woman with a little baby in her arms, who wanted to leave the train at a certain station, where they only stop the train if you have come from a long distance. As the brakesman passed through, the woman said, "Don't forget me," and he answered, "Surely not." Then a man sitting near spoke up. "Lady, don't you worry, I will see that you get off at the right place."

Some time after, the train slowed up and stopped, and this same man called out, "Here's your station." She stepped out of the train into the storm.

After the train had gone on some time, the brakeman came through and asked, "Where's the woman?" The man said, "She got off." The brakeman said, "Then she's gone to her death. We only stopped the train yonder because there was something wrong with the engine."

They called for volunteers, and went back to look for her. They searched for hours and finally found her out on the prairie, covered with a shroud of ice and snow woven about her by the pitiless storm, with the little frozen babe folded in her breast. Great was the crime of the man who wrongly directed her. Much greater the crime of all who are false teachers of religion.

It is often suggested that the people attending spiritualist seances are only the weak dupes of clever and cunning conjurors. Of course, it is quite possible for them to be only that. There are many such everywhere. But we should not forget that some of the cleverest men and women in the world, many of whom thought they knew too much to acknowledge the truth of the Bible, claim to have carefully tested the phenomena of spiritualism, and declare them true. They say the facts can be proved by any that are sufficiently interested to make the inquiry. It is claimed that many persons are now having communication with the dead. But, if such intercourse with spirits is actually happening, it is surely not with the spirits of departed friends, but with **wicked impersonating spirits.** They are wicked beings, and their doctrines are the doctrines of demons. It is the literal fulfilment of the Scriptures. "In the latter times some shall fall away from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils." By their fruits ye shall know them. While using the Bible to support spiritualism, no spiritualist believes the doctrine of the Bible. They all deny the Divinity of Our Lord. That in Him was God manifested in the flesh. They also laugh at atonement for sin by the blood.

That which is called spiritualism really denies every vital principle of the Christian religion. It is the great master lie of the devil. And those who listen to its message,

or seek the comfort of the seance room, do so at the peril of their soul, and wilfully disregard the Word of God, who has said, "Seek not unto them that have a familiar spirit."

Christian Science.

This also is another of the subtle modern deceptions that are leading many from God, and specially dangerous, because it comes in the name of Christ, and it quotes confidently from the Bible, and pretends to hold every doctrine of the Christian faith. But in reality it denies them all. It denies the personality of God. It denies that Jesus was the Christ. It denies that His blood was shed upon the Cross for the sins of men. It denies also that the actual existence of sin, and consequently the need for repentance towards God. It professes to work miracles, and undoubtedly performs some great wonders. Yet, while professing to reverence the Scriptures, these Christian Scientists handle them deceitfully to their own damnation. Satan masquerading as an angel of light is still Satan, and this thing is but another phase of that great lie of the evil one which has come to destroy souls in these last days.

When the strange circumstances of how this astonishing cult came into being through the ministry of a woman who was originally a Spiritualist medium are understood, it is most amazing to learn of the immense number of people who have been drawn into its snare. Some of the largest and finest Church buildings in the great cities of the United States and all through civilisation, now are Christian Science meeting places. Because they received not the love of the Truth, this people have been turned unto fables.

Theosophy.

This is surely another of the last day fables to which wilful unbelievers in God's Christ are now being turned. This also is of very recent development, yet it already has a great number of adherents. These are generally well-to-do, and usually affect some measure of intellectuality. Theosophists have a Church, they call the Liberal Catholic, in which they have bishops and priests and a service similar to that of the Roman Catholic, but they really deny all the essential doctrines of the Bible. They now claim that the Lord Jesus Christ Who was here 1900 years ago has now

come back and has entered the body of an Indian called Krishnamurthi, in whose presence, it has been reported, intelligent people have been said to have prostrated themselves. If he is a Christ, he is one of the false Christs our Lord said would come in His name and deceive many.

But, already this chapter is too long. It is not possible for me now to even mention the names of the many other false religious cults that are springing into being all around us. The time is surely at hand. As we have seen, these are the things we are to expect in the last days. Not any of them preach the Gospel given us in the Bible. In that blessed Book we read that, "If any man preach any other Gospel, let him be anathema." Protestantism has a name to live, but is it living that name? The Church of England is tending rapidly towards Rome. Roman Catholicism is now stronger and more assertive than it has been for many centuries. Every condition is now preparing the world that would not receive God's Christ, to receive the Devil's Antichrist. Our Lord said it. "I have come in my Father's name, Me ye will not receive, if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive." That is surely to be the ultimate consummation of all the strange latter-day religious development, now to be seen throughout Christendom.

The Lord said, "When ye see all these things, know that He is nigh, even at the door."

Be Ye Also Ready.

Everything the Bible tells about latter-day religious delusions, is now actually taking place. Surely, then, it is high time that we wake up to the grand, glorious, wonderful fact that our Lord should soon be here. Therefore, let us not sleep, as do others, but let us watch and be sober. Unless we keep our eyes wide open, we may as easily be deceived as have been others. Some of the most useful Christians I have known have been carried away into such error. Watch!

My last word of warning and pleading is for any unconverted reader. You have often heard the Gospel. But you have not yet received it. You have been warned again and again to flee from the wrath to come. You have been repeatedly entreated to repent of your sin, but you are still estranged from God. This must be your condemnation. You

refuse to believe the record God has given of His Son. What will be your end if you refuse? Let God's Word tell you. It is a most solemn thing indeed to refuse the truth in these last days. "Because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved, for this cause God shall send them strong delusion that they should believe a lie." (2 Thess., 2: 10.)

"Yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape." (1 Thess., 5: 2.)

CHAPTER III.

The Sign of Russia.

"In that day when my people of Israel dwelleth safely, shalt thou not know it? And thou shalt come from thy place, out of the north parts, thou, and many people with thee, all of them riding upon horses, a great company, and a mighty army. And thou shalt come up against my people Israel, as a cloud to cover the land; it shall be in the latter days, and I will bring thee against my land, that the heathen may know me, when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes." (Ezekiel 38, 14, 15.)

The Signs of the Times which have to do with the return to this world of God's Son from Heaven distinctly relate to mighty movements among the nations. There is surely implication as to this in our Lord's words as mentioned in Luke, 21-24. "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles (Nations), until the Times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." Thus, what is here referred to, in regard to the nations, as the fulfilling of Gentile Times has to do with something that is yet to happen to the Jews and to their city Jerusalem. Indeed, in regard to the ultimate consummation of everything that is in the purpose of the great God, all through the Divine revelation, the nations only seem to be viewed according to the measure of their connection with the people of Israel. And from the beginning of the Bible story, it is clearly intimated, that, "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. For the Lord's portion is His people; Jacob is the lot of His inheritance." So that it is thus clearly seen that the ultimate and real blessing of the nations is dependent upon the coming back into the Will of God of the people of Israel, now known as Jews.

The Times of the Gentiles.

This expression, as used by the Lord, really describes the whole of that time during which the Jews are right out of harmony with the Divine purpose for which they were originally brought into being. The beginning of this period was when God, because of their persistent sin, caused His prophet, Hosea, to write in regard to this mysterious people, "Lo-ammi, not my people." Deuteronomy, 28-13, clearly shows that the people of Israel should always have been at the head over all other nations, but through their shocking failure they came to be at the tail. Handed over first to mighty Babylon, the Jews ever since have been entirely subservient to the domination of the nations, and will continue to be so until the time arrives for their glorious restoration through the appearing of their Messiah in glory. For it is by the actual and glorious appearing of Christ, the Times of the Gentiles are to end. For the Times of the Gentiles must have an end as distinct as was their beginning. The recognition of this great Bible fact is absolutely necessary to our understanding of all Divine purpose concerning this sin-laden world.

The vision of the Great Image, that has description in the second chapter of Daniel, shows the whole course of the four great Gentile empires, that were to follow each other, during the whole time of the Divine repudiation of Israel. The entire governmental history of the world, as it was to unfold, is therein clearly depicted, right down to the time of the setting up of a fifth universal kingdom, as represented in Nebuchadnezzar's night vision, by the stone cut out of the mountain without hands, which breaks into pieces the whole image by falling on its toes. "Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth." In no sense does this smiting of the image refer to the preaching of the Gospel and its beneficent effects in the world. It is simply the Divine description of what is to happen on the earth at the inauguration of the Kingdom of Heaven over this world, through the appearing of Christ in glory and for judgment.

It is right at that time our Lord is to be manifest so that every eye shall see Him. It is then, He is to overthrow all world power, and at the same time is to set up the Kingdom of everlasting righteousness over the whole earth. And it is certainly for that event, precisely, every Christian prays, in saying, as taught by the Lord: "Thy Kingdom come."

How Russia Came.

The connection of modern Russia with the prophetic vision of unfolding history, just considered, can very well be understood, when we carefully examine the vision given o Daniel of the same four great Gentile Empires—Babylonia, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome, as that vision is related in chapter seven. These empires are always given in the same successional order, but that does not mean that any of them was ever to completely pass away. For we are told in verse seven, that, at the very time when the last of them has attained its greatest eminence, the existence of the others is still recognised. For there it says: "As concerning the rest of the Beasts," that is the Divine symbolism concerning the varied expressions of world government that now is in the world, "they had their dominion taken away, but their lives were prolonged for a season."

Now, God's Word also as clearly shows it that these very kingdoms, as they are represented by the four symbolic Beasts, are each to have some distinctive standing in the world, at the very time when Christ is coming to set up the Kingdom of Heaven over the whole earth. But it is only with the third of them we are now concerned, that is with the Grecian, for Russia is surely the modern nation that now represents ancient Greece as the third of the great prophetic, world empires. For through the pages of secular history, we can clearly trace the development and also can perceive the connection of Russia, as we now know it, right away back to the very days of Alexander the Great.

This book of Daniel was written 300 years before Greece conquered Persia. Yet is there the most wonderful accuracy between the things written by Daniel and all that actually happened in Alexander's day, and ever since, as well. There is not the least doubt whatever but that it is this mighty world conqueror that is represented by the he-goat mentioned in Daniel eight. Indeed verse 21 actually puts the

matter right beyond all doubt. "And the rough goat is Grecia, and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king." That first king was the great Alexander, and we have only to recall the astonishing circumstances connected with the rise of the Grecian Empire to have confirmed the precise exactness of all prophetic description. Alexander's appearance on the stage of world history was really like the flashing across the heavens of some brilliant meteor. In the short space of ten years he had burst into Asia with his mail-clad phalanx, and had smitten into ruin the monarchy of Persia, pulverised the power of Tyre, and had founded on a sand-waste the city of Alexandria, still a considerable sea-port and place of commercial importance. He also vanquished strong kingdoms, and then made presents of them to others, changed the entire character of whole countries, swept over the earth like some mighty tornado, and then vanished in his prime, while his kingdom went down in blood.

And here again do we find the marvellous accuracy between Divine prophecy and actual history, for in the Scripture already mentioned, it was foretold that when Alexander died, his kingdom would come to be divided into four. And speaking of Alexander and his kingdom, this was said: "Now that being broken, whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power." Then chapter eleven, verses three and four similarly showed how that on the death of Alexander, his kingdom would be divided to the four winds of heaven, but this division of the kingdom would not be to his posterity—that is, not to his sons. And sure enough, history shows how that when this king died, his empire came to be divided up among four of his generals. Now the modern kingdoms that came out of mighty Greece at the time of Alexander's decease, might all be traced right back to their Grecian source, but that is not for us now to do. Nor is there opportunity either for us here to track all through the pages of human history, the connection of that one of those four generals of Alexander, who became the little horn, or king of the North of Divine prophecy. It is in Daniel, xi., 40 to 45, that the description of the last king of the North is given. And the fact may here be mentioned that when the Scrip-

tures speak of a king, it is not of necessity always the same individual that is implied, just as when we speak of a king of England, say, we are not necessarily referring to the same person.

The ruthless Antiochus Epiphanes of history was one king of the North, but there is a last king of the North spoken of in the closing verses of Daniel eleven. This last one is there described as sweeping down like a whirlwind, at the head of masses of men and fleets of ships and right over the Judean hills into the glorious land, that is into Palestine. And it is that very thing, we are also told in Ezekiel 38, how that great Russian armies, in co-operation with others, under the leadership of an astonishing personality, there called Gog, are surely going to do in regard to the Holy Land, almost immediately before the actual appearing of Christ to the startled world. "It shall be in the latter days, and I will bring thee against my land, that the heathen may know Me, when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes."

Gog, Prince of Russia.

It may now be a surprise for some to know that Russia is thus actually spoken of by name in the prophetic Scriptures. But it is this we are surely to learn from the "last days'" description of things as given in the 38th and 39th chapters of Ezekiel. Though, for our understanding of what is written, it may be well for us first to consider the precise location of these two chapters in regard to the Divine unfolding regarding things to come. Because this is not always done, it is not so easy for some Christian people to come into the knowledge of the wonderful things that are, through the Scriptures, made known of God. The events that are so distinctly foretold in the books of the inspired prophets are never presented in a kind of disorderly confusion, but are always in most strict harmony with their ultimate unfolding. We shall see that very thing in regard to the context of all we now have under consideration.

For instance, chapter 36 speaks first of the long desolation of the Land of Israel, and God, through the prophet, therein shows that it was because of their persistent wickedness and abominable idolatry that the Jews came to be scattered among the nations, and the sacred land was thus

brought into its sad condition of age-long desolation. In verse 19, the Lord there makes solemn declaration: "I scattered them among the heathen, and they were dispersed through the countries: according to their way and according to their doings I judged them." But later, in the same chapter, there is also as clearly foretold the ultimate Divine deliverance of the Jews: "For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and I will bring you into your own land. Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you and ye shall be clean." This chapter then goes on to show how the long desolate land is to be transformed so that it shall actually become as the garden of Eden.

Then chapter 37 describes the method by which the Jewish people are to be finally restored to the everlasting purpose of God. The prophet there tells how he was carried in the Spirit of the Lord and set down in the midst of a valley which was full of very dry bones. "Can these bones live?" was the Divine question. And what a strange question it was! How could dry bones ever be made to live? But, it was God Who raised the question, and is anything ever too hard for the Lord? The God Who creates can also restore to life that which is dead; so stand out of the light you so-called "Modernists," who would hinder the people of God from receiving the Divine account, regarding all that is yet going to happen in the experience of this unhappy old world. More fitting it always is to say, as did the prophet: "O Lord God Thou knowest." For it is not to the wise and the prudent the Lord of Heaven makes known the wonderful things He is yet going to do among men, but it is to such as are as babes that the blessed knowledge is given. What only the true servant of God always has to do, is to obey God's Word. It is that Ezekiel did. "He said unto me, Prophesy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones: Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you and ye shall live: and I will lay sinews upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the Lord."

It was not an attractive commission, thus laid upon the prophet, but it was given of the Lord and Ezekiel did as he

was told. "So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone. And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above; but there was no breath in them."

That is the prophet's description of the first stage of this astonishing resurrection. And we should here take notice, concerning the resurrection, that is here having explanation, that it is to be in two distinct parts. For the prophet, having been obedient in regard to his commission, so that the valley, instead of having those very dry bones everywhere, has now come to have in it a host of bodies of men, without any breath in them, is now further instructed as to what was to be done. "Then said He unto me, Prophesy unto the wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord God; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. So I prophesied as He commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army."

Now, there is no doubt whatever as to what is meant by the strange description we have here before us. This is not a Divine picture of the great resurrection of all the dead. It should never have been imagined as being such. For God Himself goes on to explain the vision. "Then He said unto me, Son of man, THESE BONES ARE THE WHOLE HOUSE OF ISRAEL: behold they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts. Therefore, prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God: Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves, and shall put my Spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the Lord have spoken it."

That is then the actual Divine interpretation, regarding the vision of the resurrection out of the valley of dry bones. The dry bones represent the true national condition of God's covenant people Israel during the whole of the Times of

the Gentiles. And, very evidently, the intention of the vision is to show, what hundreds of other Scriptures so clearly do, that this people are again to be restored to the purpose of God. God has not cast away the Jews for ever. Their House is left to them desolate, and they are not going to see their Messiah, until they are ready to say of Him, what 1900 years ago they refused to say: "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." But that they are surely going to do, though it is only to happen when they shall see Him Whom they have pierced. And that is when the Son of man shall come in His glory. For, "Behold He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him: and all the tribes of the earth shall wail because of Him. Even so, Amen." (Rev., 1, 7.)

Two Stages.

We should carefully notice this circumstance. The resurrection of national Israel, as already suggested, is declared as going to be in two distinct stages. There was first to be a great noise, a mighty shaking and a coming together of the bones, and the covering over them of the sinews and flesh and skin. But there is here no life. There is a brief pause and then a mighty happening that causes the whole to become a mighty living army.

Now, is it any wonder, that earnest Bible students, because of all that has recently happened in regard to it, have come to believe that the first stage of Israel's resurrection has been actually consummated in what has issued for the Jews out of the recent great world war? For many hundreds of years, before this awful cataclysm came, the Turks were in possession of the Holy Land and the Jews were away in exile. Yet was it when the war was at its worst, that the extraordinary British declaration was announced in regard to the future of Palestine: "His Majesty's Government view with favor the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavors to facilitate the achievement of this object." The war was surely the great noise and the mighty shaking, out of which the dry bones have come together. I am now writing eleven years after Britain's announcement was made. Nearly 200,000 Jews are already settled in the Covenant land, and wonderful national devel-

opment has happened among the Jews of the world, but they are no nearer yet the knowledge of the Lord, their Messiah. There has surely been the noise, the shaking and the coming together of the dry bones, but not yet can it be said that Israel lives before God. Yet, because of the astonishing progress that has been made, in regard to the realisation of Zionist aspiration among the Jews of the world, it might almost now be said that Israel is practically a nation once again. Many of the exiles have gone back to the land. They are rapidly restoring the old wastes and are bringing the land into some resemblance of its former glory. But, not yet have they seen Him Whom they pierced. So that not yet has God put in them His Spirit and restored them to the great Divine purpose. This only is to happen at the appearing to them of the Son of man in His glory. It is only then, that among them that fear His name, the Son of righteousness is to arise with healing in His wings, and a nation is to be born in a day. It is the actual condition of things leading up to the glorious event, as Divinely foretold, that we now go on to examine, as the description of them is given in chapters thirty-eight and thirty-nine of the book of the prophet Ezekiel.

Gog, Prince of Russia.

Now we go on to see it that Russia is actually spoken of by name in the Scriptures. For it is surely this which is to be seen in the 39th chapter of Ezekiel, verse 1: "Son of man, set thy face against Gog, the land of Magog, prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal." Here we have mentioned the names of three of the sons of Japheth who in the time of the commencement of the nations moved off in the direction of what is now called Russia. (Gen., x: 2, 3.) This reading is from the revised version, which is just a little different from the authorised. At the time when the latter version was given, Russia was known by a different name, for until the time of Peter the Great it was called Muscovy. The Czar was formerly called the Czar of Muscovy. But the Septuagint, translated into Greek, four and a half centuries before Christ, rendered the Scripture before us, just as our revised version now does. This is certainly a wonderful example of the Divine foreknowledge concerning the ultimate national development of what were then obscure and

barbarous tribes. For who at that time could ever have imagined that an unknown tribe, then in so isolated, and remote a locality, would in the last days have come to be the head of the great agglomeration of peoples comprised in modern, Communistic Russia?

Again, we also have the other two words of identification—Meshech and Tubal. "Moscow" and "Tobolsk" are the Russian spellings of "Mosoch" and "Thobol," which again are the Greek spellings for "Meshech" and "Tubal." So then, the plain rendering of this first verse is, "Gog, Prince of Russia, Moscow, and Tobolsk.

But, who, or what is Gog? Now here indeed is a very strange thing. Nobody really knows. It is suggested as being a common name as applied to a ruler, as in the case of the Pharaohs of Egypt. In this way, Gog is seen to be simply the ideal political head of the whole region covered by the names mentioned. He is described here, as Gog, the land of Magog, chief prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal. For long centuries the chief ruler of Russia was called a Czar. No longer has Russia a Czar. For out of the great war came the complete obliteration of the form of government that was in that way represented. So that Russia has now come to be under the heel of Communism, and in Communism all men are presumed to be equal. But, in the case of Russia, the theory has not worked. For Russia's millions are now under the domination of a committee. The committee has a head, and that head is, of necessity, the strong man of Russia. The last one to be in that position will evidently be the Gog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal against whom the Divine judgment is here spoken.

God Against Gog.

"Thus saith the Lord God: I am against thee, O Gog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal." Why then does the Lord here so specifically say that He is against Gog? It can only be because, this Gog is so distinctly against God. The great Creator is never against any one, but is long suffering to all, and is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have ever-

lasting life." But, there is the possibility of men resisting the strivings of the Holy Spirit, and of so persistently rejecting God's great offer of eternal salvation, that there remaineth nothing else but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." This Gog and those found with him, in the last days, are positively against God, thus their awful madness, and the ultimate Divine judgment that is to come upon them.

Communism is absolutely and aggressively Anti-Christian. For the Communist unceasingly asserts that Christianity is the chief hindrance to the universal acceptance of all that for which Communism stands. Long ago, the Communist announced that he was out, not only to destroy all States, but all religions as well, and chiefly the one that bears the sacred name of Christ. During recent years, Communism in Russia has almost entirely obliterated, even the most meagre suggestion of Christianity they hitherto had, out of the lives of the Russian people. The entire method of education has come to be of such a character, that the coming generation will not only be indifferent to the Divine Gospel, but will surely seek to destroy its every influence among men. Though, thank God, there is still to be found, even in Communistic Russia, a Godly remnant that will never bow the knee unto Baal.

A Great Military Alliance.

Russia is now known to be making great preparation for war. The entire youth of the nation are being made ready for the impending cataclysm. It was also recently stated that no other nation is better equipped for prolonged conflict. Russia is not embarrassed now with crushing national debt, the Communistic authorities having repudiated all such obligation. The mind of the whole people is being filled to the point of saturation with the philosophy of Communism. The great aspiration is to capture the whole world with the same philosophy of government. To Communistic Russia the propagation of this ideal has come to be a real Gospel of life for all nations. No sacrifice is ever deemed too great, no price is thought too high for so desirable an achievement. To this end, the emissaries of Communism

seem to be at work everywhere among the nations. Increasing revolutionary condition in every land indicates the unceasing activity of this movement.

What it is the thirty-eighth chapter of Ezekiel shows, is a combination of many nations, under the leadership of Russia, through their armies, invading the Holy Land. The time when, is plainly stated. Verse eight says, it is to be in the latter years. That is in the latter years of the Times of the Gentiles and of the scattering of Israel. Verse sixteen shows it is going to be in the latter days; that surely means right towards the very end of the same period of time. Again, in verse eight, it is at a time when the land has been brought back from the sword, and returned Jews, gathered out of many nations, are dwelling confidently among the hills of Israel.

Now, all that is surely very clear, and the startling thing, in regard to the whole of this prophetic picture, is that it describes such a condition of things as now operates in the Holy Land, right down to its last detail. This land is now surely delivered from the sword, and out of many nations have come the Jews, who now dwell confidently in their own homes under the paternal beneficence of the British Mandate. No longer are there armies of soldiers roaming the land. Indeed there is not the least sign of military occupation anywhere, yet the returned Jews seem to dwell as confidently in their charming cottage homes in out-of-the-way places as do those in such beautiful cities as Tel-a-Viv, or as in the wonderful suburban residences all around old Jerusalem. That eighth verse of this chapter in Ezekiel is surely now having a most remarkable fulfilment all through the Holy Land.

It was to be when such a condition would operate in regard to the Land and the returned Jews settled there, that the great invasion was to happen. The nations then to be joined with Russia are clearly indicated. The first one mentioned is Persia. Persia was the second of the four great world empires, which God showed through Daniel, were to hold sway in the world during the Times of the Gentiles. As an empire it was succeeded by Greece. Still Persia never actually ceased to exist as a nation, though for many centuries its position was very insignificant.

But, in recent years, Persia has again come into some measure of prominence, chiefly because of its great oil resources. And the leading nations, through the universal need, in this mechanical age, for oil as fuel have sought, apparently in vain, for alliance with this obscure nation, for according to recent press report, the nation that has found favor with Persian politicians is Soviet Russia, so that these two peoples are now said to be in close relationship.

Ethiopia is the next people mentioned as being in this last day alliance with Russia and our Bible map shows Ethiopia to be south of Egypt in the Soudan, and as the emissaries of Communistic Russia are now known to be at work among even the most inconsiderable of peoples, we can have no reason to doubt the possibility of the Soudanese ultimately joining with Russia for the invasion of the Holy Land, as God's Word here very plainly says they will do.

Then there is Libya, another Mahommedan people, close alongside of Egypt, joining with these others in all the panoply of war for this long foretold invasion of the Holy Land, in the last days.

Gomer.

Verse eight mentions also, "Gomer and all his bands. and Togarmah of the north quarters, and all his bands." Now, it is a remarkable thing that many of the names that appear in this chapter, first occur in the tenth chapter of Genesis, the portion of God's Word that describes the beginning of all the nations. There we learn that Gomer was the grandson of Noah, while Togarmah was Gomer's son. This Gomer is said to be the progenitor of the ancient Cimerians, while according to historic tradition, his three sons, Ashkenaz, Riphath and Togarmah ultimately settled on the north coast of the Black Sea. Their country was first called "Gomeria" then "Cimmeria," and ultimately, Crimea. Other descendants of Gomer are said to have travelled along the Danube and settled in the land now called Germany. According to some authorities, their land was first called "The Land of Gomer" or "Gomerland" then passing into its modern equivalent, Germany.

So that all of this would mean that Germany is to be found co-operating with Russia in connection with this last day battle. And surely it is not now without significance, that while Germany is now a member of the League of Nations, still this great nation is stated to be also in alliance with Russia. Germany has been obliged to greatly reduce her armies, yet vast numbers of men there are being trained for war, while it is also being generally reported, that German machines and men have been sent into Russia for the making of guns, munitions and aeroplanes. And, if war comes soon, there is no greater likelihood than that Germany will be found on the side of Russia. At anyrate, that is precisely what God's Word here seems to teach. If Gomer and all his bands do not represent modern Germany, then, whatever other people can this Gomer be?

The same condition applies to what is said here in regard to "Togarmah and all his bands." The scholars say that Togarmah stands for the Armenians of the Caucasus. But, as a nation, the Armenians have become extinct. Because of their adherence to the Christian Faith, Turkey has literally swept this people out of national existance, and since the termination of the great war, the Turks have transferred their new seat of government from Constantinople to a city in this very land of Togarmah. So that it becomes quite apparent, that it is Turkey, along with her other subordinate peoples, that are here indicated as the Togarmah and all her bands that will be found in alliance with Russia for the last days' assault upon the Holy Land, soon before the appearing of the Lord for the final deliverance of Israel. Nor is it without significance, surely, that Russia and Turkey are now under treaty and that, under the new conditions, Turkey should soon be a mightier nation than for centuries past.

What is Next to Happen?

The next stage of the prophetic development is not likely to unfold until after the rapture of the Church to Heaven. But, the description of it is very clearly given. "Thou shalt come like a storm, thou shalt be like a cloud to cover the land, thou, and all thy bands, and many people with thee." That is, other peoples, besides these

others so clearly defined are coming with them. These may include nations from the far east, such as China. And it is the Holy Land they are to invade. "Thus saith the Lord God: It shall also come to pass, that at the same time shall things come into thy mind, and thou shalt think an evil thought: and thou shalt say, I will go up to the land of unwalled villages; I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates."

That indeed is an exact description of things as they are now in Palestine. No longer do the people, there, dwell together in walled cities for mutual defence as they did formerly. Their habitations are as peaceable in appearance as are the quiet country villages of say old England. The returned Jews now have the cattle and the goods, God's Word here tells us these other nations are to covet.

The Defence Taken Up.

By whom, we are told in verse thirteen. "Sheba and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish with all the young lions thereof, shall say unto thee, Art thou come to take a spoil? hast thou gathered thy company to take a prey? to carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to take a great spoil?"

Here, then are mentioned three peoples who, when the great invasion of the Holy Land takes place, are then to be found in opposition to the invaders. One of these is spoken of as being "The Merchants of Tarshish, with all the young lions thereof." In a later chapter, I shall seek to show that the merchant nation of England with all the young nations that have emerged therefrom, including also the United States, fulfils everything that is here implied. Suffice it now to say, that every Bible reference to Tarshish, invariably suggests it as being a nation of traders, and its fleets of ships have constant mention. As this whole incident is to occur at the very end of the Times of the Gentiles, it is plainly evident that the reference is to some great modern nation, and one, out of which have sprung into being other younger nations, who, in the last days will be found, largely to cherish similar ideal to that of the parent stock. Then, also, because Britain, if such an invasion of the Holy Land

were now to take place, through holding the Mandate over the sacred country, would of necessity have to do the very thing that is here stated, there should not be the least difficulty of seeing the identity of this nation with the Prophetic Tarshish. Sheba and Dedan are Arab territories, on the edge of the Red Sea, and both of them are now under the British flag.

The Divine Judgment.

It is not by the Merchants of Tarshish that the mighty invading army is to be driven back out of the Holy Land. It is to be the day of Israel's restoration and God Himself is to deliver His people. It is also to be a time of Divine judgment upon the finally impenitent nations. Terrible is the description of what is then to be. For we read from verse eighteen as follows:

"And it shall come to pass at the same time when Gog shall come against the land of Israel, saith the Lord God, that my fury shall come in my face. For in my jealousy and in the fire of my wrath have I spoken. Surely in that day there shall be a great shaking in the Land of Israel; so that the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the heaven, and the beasts of the field, and all things that creep upon the earth, and all the men that are upon the face of the whole earth, shall shake at my presence and the mountains shall be thrown down, and the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall."

This is surely the time of the Great Tribulation, concerning which, the Lord said, so great is it to be, that except God shortened the days of it, no flesh should be saved. A time of fearful earthquake and general physical upheaval is it to be. A time of awful pestilence and famine and of general religious apostasy and degradation is also its description. The following chapter tells us that of the mighty combination of armies joined then with that of Russia, five-sixths of them are to be slain, and that it will take seven months afterwards to bury the dead.

The Purpose of it.

This is seen to be the only way that Israel and a remnant of the nations can be prepared for the glorious millennial reign of Christ over this old world. Men will not

come into the will of God through the acceptance of the Gospel. It is therefore by awful judgment that the Almighty will bring the members of the human race to their knees. Says the Lord: "Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life." Also "Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof. . . . When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer."

The ultimate consummation of all these things is plainly stated by God in the closing verse of Ezekiel 38. "Thus will I magnify myself, and sanctify myself; and I will be known in the eyes of many nations, and they shall know that I am the Lord." Also in verse twelve of the following chapter is the ultimate goal of everything made known. "So the House of Israel shall know that I am the Lord their God from that day forward. And the heathen shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity: because they trespassed against me, therefore I hid my face from them, and gave them into the hands of their enemies, so fell they all by the sword."

And again: "When I have brought them again from the people, and gathered them out of their enemies' lands, and am sanctified in them in the sight of many nations; then shall they know that I am the Lord their God, which caused them to be led into captivity among the heathen: but I have gathered them into their own land, and have left none of them any more there. Neither will I hide my face any more from them: for I have poured out my Spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord God."

So then, from all the things now under consideration, we should have no difficulty in perceiving that Russia is to be looked upon as a sign of the nearness of the Second Coming to this world of the Lord Jesus Christ. Russia has attained the political position, God's Word said it would have at that very time. It now has the precise international connections it was to have. The Russian propagandists are fomenting trouble throughout the earth. The whole people

are being mobilised for war. The Jews are returning now to their own land. The former desolations are being restored and wonderful developments are everywhere.

We are in the latter days! What then?

The Lord Should Soon be Here.

God's King must be here soon. All the signs of the times show the event to be near. "When ye see all these things know ye that He is at the doors." If we close our eyes to what is happening among the nations in connection with the fulfilment of Divine Prophecy, we shall surely be grievously affected when He comes. Remember, also, before the things of our text can actually happen, the Lord is to call His true people, those who love His appearing, from the earth, and then events will move rapidly. If you are then left behind, you will probably never be amongst the glorified in heaven! In the outer darkness there will then be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth for those who are left to it.

Do you love the appearing of the Lord? Is it the desire of your life for Him to come?

Dear old Andrew Bonar once visited the United States, and as he was about returning home friends in New York gave him a farewell meeting. One of the speakers, in closing his address, applied the words of Paul to Timothy to him, saying: "There is crown of righteousness laid up for him which the Lord, the Righteous Judge, shall give him in that day." But Mr. Bonar, coming forward, and holding up his hand for silence, concluded the quotation, adding: "And not to me only, but also to all that love His appearing." Oh! my dear reader, Christ, our Lord, will give you the crown on that day if you will be ready to receive it. He might come to-day. Then, I ask, are you ready? Receive Him as your Saviour now, and you will be with Him yonder to share in all His eternal glory.

CHAPTER IV.

The Sign of The British Race.

"Sheba and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish, with all the young lions thereof, shall say unto thee, Art thou come to take a spoil? hast thou gathered thy company to take a prey? to carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to take a great spoil?" (Ezekiel, 38-13.)

In the chapter immediately before this one, we have already seen, that these words occur in the midst of a thrilling, Divine description of a terrific invasion of the Holy Land. We have also carefully noted, that the occasion when it is to be is in the very last days of the Times of the Gentiles. Therefore, the incident still awaits fulfilment. For every detail of the Prophetic narrative very clearly shows that it cannot possibly refer to any other previous incident of similar character. Nor is there ever the least reason to imagine, as some have done, that the whole account is to be taken as a kind of prophetical parable. The suggestion of reality is obvious in every statement made.

The awful tragedy is to be, as is plainly stated, in the Latter Days, and at a time when returned Jews, out of many people, are to be seen busily engaged in restoring the land from its age-long condition of waste and desolation. The quiet confidence and deep sense of security in regard to these returned Jews has particular emphasis throughout the Divine unfolding. It is precisely at such a time, that the armies of many nations, in association with those of Russia, are going to sweep over the whole of the sacred land. The assault will be like the breaking through of some mighty tornado. "Thou shalt ascend and come like a storm, thou shalt be like a cloud to cover the land, thou and all thy bands, and many people with thee." It will be just then, we are told, that this Sheba and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish, along with the young lions thereof, are to offer

opposition in regard to the mighty invading host. So that it is at once quite evident, that whatever may be the identity of these latter mentioned nations, they are here indicated as being friends to the Jewish people, in the time of the end, and for some reason or another will have come to accept the responsibility then of protecting the Holy Land from invasion. We may surely realise then, that such carefully expressed particulars are intended to be of help to us in making out the identity of those who are to be the defenders of the helpless Jews in this their time of awful trouble. And neither should such identification either be now so very hard, because of all that has recently happened in regard to the settlement of the Jews in the Divinely covenanted land.

The Living Word of God.

In these remarkable times of ours, there is surely nothing of more thrilling interest, than is the study of the Sacred Scriptures. There is now an astonishing fatuity abroad in Christendom. This is in regard to those preachers who are foolishly telling the world that the Old Testament is obsolete, hopelessly out of date, and of no further value to humanity. Such people really give themselves away. For it is by what these men say, there becomes apparent their ignorance of the wonderful things the Great God has caused to be written. If these authorities had only studied for themselves the Scripture of Truth, instead of filling up their minds, as so many of them have surely done, with the subtilties of an infidel scholarship, they would never have known anything else but that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God and," in its every part, "is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

Now here is a wonderful thing! It is that the Bible is the clearest and also the most reliable history of the human race ever known. It is the only Divinely authorised history and is therefore thorough and exact in its every detail. Each fact is plainly stated. The origin of all the nations is distinctly made known, and the development of many of them is very clearly disclosed. Of course, it is not by its modern name, in each case, that the development of a nation,

in the Scriptures, is thus to be discerned. In regard to some of them, as has been seen in the previous chapter, in Bible history, certain of the nations begin to have mention by the names under which they now are known. But, in regard to some other nations, such could not be the case. For example, the name Britain was only given to the land of the British people in the times of the Romans and Greeks. From the earliest days, it was from the mines of Cornwall the world was supplied with tin. It was very evidently because of that, the name "Baratanic" or "Tin Islands" was given to the whole country. That is why in Webster's Standard Dictionary, in regard to the name "Britannia," it says that the word originally represented "a metallic compound or alloy, consisting chiefly of block-tin, with some antimony, and a small proportion of copper and brass." It was from the British Isles that such metals then came. No wonder is it, then, that it was Baratanic, or Britain, by which the country came to be known. And we shall later see how this very characteristic will also help us greatly in identifying the place of the British nation in the Holy Scriptures. For, while it is not by that name the people of this land has Bible mention, yet we shall find distinct reference therein to the nation that sold tin, while everything else said in regard to it can only be found to apply to the land and people of the British race. And when we remember the unique position this people holds among the nations, and what has recently happened in regard to the settlement of the Jews again in their own land, it would surely have to be deemed a most extraordinary thing, indeed, if the British people had no mention or place at all, especially in the Prophetic Scriptures.

God and the Nations.

As already has been stated, it is from the Bible we learn that from the very beginning of national life the nations were given location, according to clear Divine plan. "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance . . . He set the bounds of the people according to the number of the Children of Israel." And so do we learn it is yet to be in the glorious future, that is made known through the Prophetic Scriptures. Every nation is then going to be located according to the original Divine plan. It is when

the Christ of God reigns upon David's Throne, as He surely is going to do, that then are the bounds of all the nations going to be set in accord with their relationship to the Children of Israel. That indeed is the time, as foretold in Isaiah 2, "That the mountain of the Lord's House shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come and let us go up to the Mountain of the Lord, to the House of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And He shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

Identity Established.

How then is it, that the identity is to be made clear of the nations that find mention in the Scripture that is put at the head of this present chapter? It can only be done in the same way as all other national identity is surely found in the Scriptures. And that is by tracing through their development away back to the beginning of all the nations, as the origin of each is made known to us in God's blessed Word. For instance, the people called "Jews" were once known as "the Children of Israel." They were only thus designated, because "Israel" was the God-given name of the father of their race. It is in that very same way that other nations, having prominent Bible mention, came into their national names. In the Bible, the name given to many of the nations, right through, is precisely that of the first man in regard to each of them. And, here, we should not forget that the Bible definitely claims to explain the beginnings of all the nations. One little Scripture now to be mentioned is sufficient to prove what is here said. This is to be found in the tenth of Genesis. Here are given the names of Noah's descendants, who, after the mighty deluge, repopulated the devastated earth. It is in the thirty-second verse where we read that, "These are the families of the sons of Noah after their generations, in their nations; and by

these were the nations in the earth divided after the flood."

Noah's three sons were Shem, Ham, and Japheth, and such are precisely the names given to the three distinct races into which the entire world's population has come to be scientifically divided. And so it was from the loins of Shem, Ham and Japheth came forth the men who, according to our Scripture, laid the foundations of the various nations into which earth's people came to be divided. The names of the sons of these three pioneers of the human race are precisely stated "after their families, after their tongues, in their lands, after their nations." And "by these were the nations divided in the earth after the flood."

Tarshish.

It is really only the history of one of these nations by which the earth was divided after the Flood, we are now under obligation to consider. That is the one called "Tarshish," and which we are surely going to find has very frequent reference in the Scriptures. We shall also see it to be the name of a nation that goes all the way through into the millennial reign of Christ over the earth.

The history of this Tarshish begins early in the inspired records. Javan was the grandson of Noah. Concerning his sons we are given most interesting information in relation to the original settlement of certain countries: "And the sons of Javan; Elishah, and TARSHISH, Kittim and Dodanim. By these were the isles of the Gentiles divided in their lands; every one after his tongue, after their families, in their nations." (Gen., x., 4, 5.) Thus we are told that Tarshish was one of those who, with their families, made their homes in the isles of the Gentiles.

The reference is thus evidently to an island people. There are those who say, that the word translated "isles" does not of necessity mean "islands" but rather coast-lands. But, the objection hardly seems to carry much force, seeing that where there are islands, there are, of necessity, coast-lands. And we shall afterwards find that the people represented by Tarshish in the Scriptures are often seen to be associated with isles that are unmistakably surrounded by the ocean. This is therefore an indication of identity, that cannot be altogether slighted by the student of all that God has caused to be written.

There is another very significant feature in regard to the various Bible references to this "Tarshish." It is in regard to its association always with maritime conditions. Ships, navies, merchandise, and even great ocean disasters have very persistent Bible mention in relation to the people of this Tarshish country.

The next time the name appears in the Scriptures, after the tenth of Genesis reference, is when the people of Israel have come to be a great nation. Solomon is on the throne and an extensive commerce has come to be established with other far-spread peoples. But, here is a fact worthy of consideration. Not even in the greatest period of Israel's past history has its people ever been a maritime nation. Israel has never owned fleets of ships, with which to do business on deep waters. Consequently, for its trade, Israel has always had to depend on the ships of other nations. That would seem why we are told in first Kings, x., 22, that "The king had at sea a navy of Tarshish with the navy of Hiram; once in three years came the navy of Tarshish, bringing gold and silver, ivory and apes, and peacocks."

Now what this Scripture tells us is, that King Solomon had at sea, in his service, two distinct navies. One of these was that of King Hiram; the other was that of a people called Tarshish. And first Kings, 5:11, plainly tells us how King Solomon, year by year, contributed considerably to Hiram's revenue for service rendered. It is hardly too much, surely, now to suggest, that Solomon probably paid in similar kind for the hire of the ships of Tarshish, even as he did for those of Hiram. But what it is we are now specially noticing is, that in Solomon's day, the people descended from Noah's great-grandson, Tarshish, have by this time become a ship-owning nation. Thus were they surely, because of their being an island people.

Again in I. Kings, xxii., 48, we are told of a certain king in Judah, much later, as to time, engaging in the same maritime enterprise, but with less happy result than in the case of Solomon. "Jehosaphat made ships of Tarshish to go to Ophir for gold; but they went not; for the ships were broken at Ezion-geber."

What is that? "Jehosaphat MADE ships of Tarshish to go to Ophir." That should mean the same transaction as in the case of Solomon. This king also employed the

ships of Tarshish and sent them to carry on his commerce with Ophir.

Now it is not easy to definitely locate Ophir. But, it is quite evident, that the land of Ophir lay far away east of Palestine, and probably was the same as that from which king Solomon secured his gold, silver, ivory, apes and peacocks. Ezion-geber, where Jehosaphat's ships of Tarshish were wrecked, was situated on the shores of the Arabian Gulf, so that this trade was with a country in the far East. Evidently, Solomon's ships took three years to make the round trip. Thus, it would seem quite apparent, especially judging from the character of the merchandise secured, and the length of time taken for the voyage, that it was India to which the ships of Tarshish were then made to go. And it may not now be without significance to recall here, that India is now an integral part of the British Empire, while its people have already fought side by side with Britain's soldiers in the defence of a helpless people.

Traders in Tin.

The next Bible reference to be noticed is distinctly illuminating. It is to be found in Ezekiel 27 and verse 12: "Tarshish was thy merchant by reason of the multitude of all kind of riches; with silver, iron, tin, and lead, they traded in thy fairs."

This Word of the Lord is addressed to ancient Tyre. The commerce of this great city with the world's nations was then immense. Almost the whole of this chapter is taken up with the mention of the far-spread nations of the earth, and the character of the trade they carried on with this great commercial centre. Everything said, in regard to these, is of thrilling interest to the true Bible student. The different articles of their commerce, in the case of each, makes definitely clear the identity of nations always only referred to in the Scriptures by their Bible names. One of these was Tarshish, the representatives of which are here said to have traded in the fairs of Tyre. Their special trade was "with silver, iron, tin, and lead." And, as already has been stated, it was from Britain such metals were then obtained. It was because of that, the country came to have the name "Britain" or "Baratanic," "the Tin Islands." Then why should there be any difficulty in

recognising these sellers of tin from Tarshish, in great Tyre's markets, as being early British traders? For if, at that time, the people of Britain were sufficiently advanced to develop their mines so as to supply the world with tin and the other kindred commodities mentioned, why should it be thought unlikely that they then knew enough also, to send abroad their own business representatives to sell them? At anyrate, God's Word here tells us, that the men of Tarshish were there in the fairs of Tyre selling the tin and iron and lead and silver that only then could have come from Britain's mines.

The explanation given by some of the older commentators is rather confusing. They suggest that this Tarshish may have been a certain small city that existed then in the south of Spain, near to Gibraltar, called Tartessus. These godly men thought it possible that the Phoenicians brought tin and the other things from Britain to this place, and from there traded them with other portions of the world. All of that is only supposition. And there is nothing at all in regard to any of the other Bible references to Tarshish that would support the suggestion that any such little city in Spain was the place indicated. There is now no such city of Tartessus. Yet, as we here go on to see, in the very time of the end, immediately before the setting up of the Millennial Kingdom, God's Word unmistakably shows that this Tarshish is then to be a mighty maritime nation exercising a very great influence among earth's other nations.

It may here be of interest to mention, that not many of the older commentators were students of the Prophetic Scriptures. Generally, Prophecy, as it relates to the future, had hardly any place at all in their ministry. And it surely cannot be without significance to recall here, what God told Daniel, how that the Words were sealed up until the time of the end. But, in the time of the end, God said, "The wise shall understand."

The Restorers of Israel.

It is that, we are told this Tarshish was to be, in the time when the great restoration would be at hand. It is this very thing we are surely told in Isaiah 60 and verse 9. There we find the Almighty making clear announcement of the fact. "Surely the isles shall wait for Me, and the

ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from far, their silver and gold with them, unto the Name of the Lord thy God, and to the Holy One of Israel, because He hath glorified thee."

We now notice, first, the position of this very remarkable statement. It is in a chapter, that speaks only of a future restoration of the scattered people of Israel. See how its story begins!

"Arise, shine; for thy Light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising."

All of this only refers to the nation of Israel. It has not the least relationship to the Church, as some, without reason, have imagined. The glory of the Church has every necessary description in the New Testament. The Old Testament belongs to Israel.

Something else can now be said. What is here mentioned refers only to a future restoration of God's covenant people, and to nothing else. A glance at some of the things, plainly stated, in the chapter before us, proves it.

Verse ten, tells us how, after the ships of Tarshish have brought the sons of Israel from far, that, "The sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee: for in my wrath I smote thee, but in my favor I had mercy on thee."

This very plainly shows it, that this building up of the Land of Israel is at a time when God's wrath, in regard to the covenant people, is ended. This is a complete restoration of Israel to the favor of their God, that surely yet has to be brought in. That it all belongs to an unprecedented condition of things that yet has to be is altogether clear from the verses which follow.

"Therefore thy gates shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night; that men may bring unto thee the forces of the Gentiles, and that their kings may be brought. For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted. . . . The sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee; and all they that despised thee shall bow

themselves down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee, The city of the Lord, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel. . . . The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee; but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting Light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended. . . . Thy people shall be all righteous: they shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified."

Sufficient quotation has been given from the chapter to prove what is now being claimed. The whole account is the Divine description of a future and complete restoration of the nation of Israel. It refers to the time when their Light, Who is elsewhere spoken of as The Sun of Righteousness, has come, and as the first verse says of what will then have happened, "The glory of the Lord is risen upon thee."

Verse 2 is really entirely conclusive. "For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people."

This reference is to the awful spiritual darkness among men generally in the closing days of this Gospel Age. It is indeed of that very time the Apostle Paul wrote in the fifth chapter of first Thessalonians: "Ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief, ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation."

The Scripture, just given, shows us the real difference between the true believer and the unbeliever. The one belongs to the day and the other to the night. The one walks in the light of God's Word, which is as a lamp that shineth in a dark place; the other is walking in darkness, without God, and also without any hope as to the future. The true child of God is waiting for the shout of the descending Lord, Who in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, is to catch away every believer from the earth in the glorious rapture, that is surely going to be for the whole Church of God.

It is a while after that wonderful event, that the Lord is to appear in glory to Israel. Every eye is then to see him, and specially that of those who pierced Him.

But, leading up to this time of wonderful and glorious consummation, there are to be certain necessary conditions of preparation. The Prophetic Scriptures show that there is to be first a partial gathering back of Israel to their land. In our previous chapter, the outstanding features of this partial restoration were there considered. In yet a later chapter, more, still, will have to be said. But it is the ninth verse of Isaiah 60, that shows how this first portion of Israel's restoration is to be brought about. It is here how God says that, "Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from far."

So that, here again, we have the isles and the ships of Tarshish Divinely joined together. The isles and the ships of Tarshish shall wait for God. That is, in this service to be rendered to the scattered sons of Israel, whether they would know it or not, the Tarshish people would then be serving God. They would be His instruments in the achievement of the great Divine purpose. Now, not to any other country can such a description be seen to apply as it does to Britain, which is indeed a very far-flung empire. But, we have only to remember what has recently happened, in regard to Britain and the return of the Jews to their land, to at once feel that the great Prophecy must now be in actual fulfilment.

The Great Declaration.

Consider step by step what has already happened. There was first the remarkable announcement of the British Government, made in 1917, even when the world's nations were hard at war. God, through Isaiah, had long before declared, how that the isles would wait for Him and that the ships of Tarshish were going to be the first to bring back the sons of Israel. The communication of Earl Balfour, in November, 1917, to Lord Rothschild can only be looked upon as being possibly the first phase in regard to the great Prophetic achievement. A glance at the terms of it will show its wonderful harmony with all that God had announced would ultimately be.

Foreign Office, Nov. 2nd, 1917.

Dear Lord Rothschild,—I have much pleasure in conveying to you on behalf of His Majesty's Government the following declaration of sympathy with Jewish Zionist aspirations, which has been submitted to and approved by the Cabinet:

"His Majesty's Government view with favor the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavors to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country."

I should be grateful if you would bring this declaration to the knowledge of the Zionist Federation.—Yours sincerely,

(Signed) ARTHUR JAMES BALFOUR.

It was no wonder then, surely, that the "Jewish Chronicle," at the time of this announcement, should declare that then, "With one step the Jewish cause has made a great bound forward."

The whole of Judaism felt the thrill of the wonderful occasion. Here was how one clever Jewish writer expressed the feelings of his people:

"The declaration of His Majesty's Government as to the future of Palestine in relation to the Jewish people marks a new epoch for our race. For the British Government in accord—it is without doubt to be assumed—with the rest of the Allies, has declared itself in favor of the setting-up in Palestine of a National Home for the Jewish people, and has undertaken to use its best endeavors to facilitate the achievement of that object. Amidst all that is so dark and dismal and tragic throughout the world, there has thus arisen for the Jews a great light. It is the perceptible lifting of the cloud of centuries, the palpable sign that the Jew—condemned for two thousand years to unparalleled wrong—is at last coming to his right. The prospect has at last definitely opened of a rectification of the Jews' anomalous position among the nations of the earth. He is to be given the opportunity and the means whereby,

in place of being an hyphenation, he can become a nation. Instead of, as a Jew, filling a place at best equivocal and doubtful, even to himself, and always with an apologetic cringing, inseparable from his position, he can—as Jew—stand proud and erect, endowed with national being. In place of being a wanderer in every clime, there is to be a home for him in his ancient land. The day of his exile is to be ended."

Others of Israel's race, at the same time, expressed the general understanding as to the meaning of what then had happened. For one of the Jews' leaders, regarding this same declaration, said that it "is one of the most wonderful in all the long Jewish annals. . . . For two thousand years the Jews have wandered over the face of the globe—'the fugitive and vagabond,' among peoples," and now "the peace promises to end at a stroke that monumental tale of homelessness."

Again, the "Jewish Chronicle's" leading article just thrilled over with joy in the anticipation of what was felt soon to be at hand:

"We have called the Government declaration 'a Jewish triumph.' It is in truth much more; it is a triumph for civilisation and for humanity. For it points the way to not alone an ending of the brutal suppression of our people, from which directly they have suffered the last two thousand years, but from which civilisation, albeit indirectly, has suffered no less certainly. It will mean releasing for mankind, as a great spiritual force, the soul of our people, cramped and bound as it hitherto has been, because of the world position till now assigned to the Jew. The time can at last be described when the Jew will be able, without let or hindrance, to perform for the world his mission of Judaism, that mission which alone is the justification for his existence as a Jew, and the sense of his responsibility for which has alone enabled him to endure the untellable suffering to which our people have been subjected. . . . The Government declaration marks the definite opening of a new chapter—we believe, a great and glorious chapter—in the history of our people. It is a memorable day for Israel: 'This is the day the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad therein.'"

A few weeks after the same great declaration by the British Government, a huge Jewish mass meeting was held in the London Opera House, at which was enthusiastically carried the following resolution:

"This mass meeting, representing all sections of the Jewish community in the United Kigdom, conveys to His Majesty's Government an expression of heartfelt gratitude for their declaration in favor of the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people. It assures His Majesty's Government that their historic action in support of the national aspirations of the Jewish people has evoked among Jews the most profound sentiments of joy. This meeting further pledges its utmost endeavor to give its whole-hearted support to the Zionist cause."

That last clause meant, that those who were present pledged themselves to do everything possible to bring about the speedy accomplishment of what the British Government had already guaranteed—the restoration of the Jews as a nation to Palestine. And on the platform were the leading Jews of Great Britain, including Lord Rothschild, Sir Mark Sykes, M.P., the Chief Rabbi, Dr. Gaster, and Israel Zangwill. Lord Robert Cecil was one of the speakers. Here was the description of what was, as the great statesman addressed the great crowd of Jewish patriots!

"Probably the greatest step which the British Government has taken with a view to secure to all peoples his mission of Judaism, that mission which alone is the justification for his existence as a Jew, and the sense of his responsibility for which has alone enabled him to endure the untellable suffering to which our people have been subjected. . . . The Government declaration marks the definite opening of a new chapter—we believe, a great and glorious chapter—in the history of our people. It is a memorable day for Israel: 'This is the day the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad therein.' "

The above matters have here had mention only because they clearly show, that Britain's declaration regarding the restoration of the Jews to Palestine was, at the time, universally recognised as being something in the nature of a mighty historic epoch. It was then having wide recognition as a matter of solemn and sacred importance. And one

can scarcely realise the possibility of any other of the world's nations doing what Britain then was proposing to do. It was a terrific undertaking. The best efforts of a leading modern nation were going to be used in the establishment of a national home in Palestine for the age-long exiled sons of Israel. It was the acceptance of a mighty responsibility. So that as the sacredness of the land concerned, and the everlasting covenant of the Great God, regarding it and its people, are remembered, surely it cannot be hard to realise the whole circumstance as really being the literal fulfilment of the Prophecy we now have specially under review. "Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first to bring thy sons from far." And every historic circumstance that has happened since, fully confirms the suggestion. The surrender of Jerusalem to the troops under the British Commander, General Allenby: the granting of the League of Nations Mandate over Palestine to the British nation: the complete expulsion of the Turks: the rapid restoration of the Jews and the wonderful developments that have already taken place from end to end of the Holy Land, and many other things, as well, would all seem to indicate that it was the far-flung British Empire, the Deity had in prospect, as being the first to render aid in regard to the restoration of the scattered sons of Israel to the Covenant Land. The ships of Britain have actually been the first to bring back the exiles. What God, through Isaiah, said, was that the ships of Tarshish would do it. There is not now in the world any nation of that name. Neither has there ever been. It therefore seems altogether evident that the ships of Tarshish are the ships of Great Britain, seeing that they are British ships, and the nation to which they belong, that are literally doing what God so long ago foretold they would do.

Tarshish and the Young Lions.

We have already studied, in the previous chapter, certain features in regard to the mighty invasion of Palestine, that is yet to be, as the description of it is given in Ezekiel 38. When the great armies of the Northern Confederacy are sweeping over the land, then, as already mentioned, is going to be fulfilled, what is so plainly foretold in verse 13.

"Sheba and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish, with all the young lions thereof, shall say unto thee, Art thou come to take a spoil? hast thou gathered thy company to take a prey? to carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to take a great spoil?"

This incident, of necessity, happens some time after the return to Palestine of the Jews, as foretold in Isaiah 60. The Jews had first to be brought back, and then come to be found engaged in the restoration of the land, before this other Prophecy could begin to have its fulfilment. What we now have to notice is, what is said as to those who will stand up in defence of the returned Jews. These are, "Sheba and Dedan and the merchants of Tarshish, with all the young lions thereof."

The location of both Sheba and Dedan is well known. They occupy territory south of the Persian Gulf. Both of them are now under the mandatory control of Britain, the same as Palestine now is. Both Sheba and Dedan would seem to represent the whole of the hinterland, beyond the coast, including Iraq, which now represents ancient Mesopotamia. Indeed, this whole country actually takes in the whole 300,000 square miles, from the River of Egypt to the great River, the River Euphrates, which God originally conferred upon Abram's seed to be their everlasting possession. It is surely not without significance, therefore, that the whole of that territory is now under British Mandate.

The Prophetic statement also shows that the Tarshish people that would defend the returned Jews would be a distinctly merchant nation. It is that, Great Britain always has been. Even back there in ancient Tyre, its travelling men selling tin, and its ships under charter to king Solomon, bringing to him, from India, gold, ivory, apes and peacocks' feathers, everything said of this Tarshish nation always stresses this trading characteristic. The great Napoleon ridiculed the British race as being a nation of shopkeepers. Others have done likewise, probably to their bitter cost. God's Word shows it, that just such a nation of traders would become responsible for, at least, the beginning of Israel's return, and afterwards for its defence. Britain has at least begun to do that, therefore the whole weight of evidence is in favor of Britain being Tarshish.

A Colonising Nation.

This the British always have been. Many nations have sprung from the loins of Britain. Our Scripture speaks of "The merchants of Tarshish and all the young lions thereof." That would suggest Tarshish as being the parent lion, and the young lions as being the family of nations, that were to come from Tarshish. It is certainly an exact description of the relationship that now maintains between the mother country of Britain and the younger nations that have come from her. Also is it in precise harmony with what actually happened at the time of the Great War. Every part of the empire wholeheartedly stood in with the Motherland. It is exactly the same thing that the Great God says is going to happen, when the mighty devastating armies again sweep down over Palestine. The Arab peoples, actually cousins of the Jews, will be with them, even as they were so found in the time of the Great War. "Sheba and Dedan and the merchants of Tarshish, with all the young lions thereof."

What of the United States?

Well, what? I am glad for the exactness of the Divine words: "The merchants of Tarshish, with ALL the young lions thereof." That means, every nation that has come out of Britain. It was the British people who colonised the United States, even as they colonised Canada, Australia, New Zealand and other lands as well. The original founders of the United States, as a nation, were people of the British race, and as one of the young lions of Britain, the relation was long maintained. We are now, therefore, seeing how that, in regard to the working out of the great eternal purposes, the Deity always keeps in view just precisely such relationship. In connection with the recent Great War, although everything seemed right against its possibility, yet the people of the United States were ultimately constrained to also stand in with the other Young Lions of the old Motherland. And when there comes this terrific invasion of Palestine, as God's Word makes known is going to be, all of the young lions again are going to be found supporting the Motherland, in regard to her God-conferred stewardship over the Sacred Land. Every circumstance now known

in relation to national relationships clearly shows that this is just what the people of the United States then will be found doing.

God and the Development of Nations.

There is a Divine preparation of nations, just as there is also a preparation of individuals, in regard to the outworking of Divine purpose. This preparation is often seen to have commenced long before the actual consummation of the great purpose. There was a time when Britons were heathens. Then, they were without knowledge of God. In the Book of Jonah, there is given a remarkable illustration of Britain's early religious condition. Jonah was told to go to Nineveh to prophesy against the wickedness of the great city. The prophet was unwilling to undertake the responsibility. Then we read that, "Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord, and went down to Joppa; and he found a ship going to Tarshish: so he paid the fare thereof, and went down into it, to go with them unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord."

This shows the actual location of Tarshish to be away west from Palestine. It also shows that then the people of Tarshish were without God. The disobedient prophet thought that by going there he would be right away from the Divine Presence. Tarshish was then a heathen land. For it was not until after Christ came, the people of Britain were brought into the Divine knowledge, through the Gospel, and the whole character, condition and ideal of the people became changed. The history of the Gospel in regard to Britain is really a story that thrills, but cannot here be told. But that history has only to be understod, for the fact to be realised that, somehow, Britain has ever since seemed to be under the special care of the Eternal God. From being an obscure savage people, there has arisen one of the largest empires the world has ever known. An empire fifty-two times the size of Germany, fifty-three times the size of France, and nearly four times the size of the United States, and which extends over an area of 9,000,000 square miles. And it has grown even larger since the close of the Great War. Our merchant ships have an aggregate tonnage of 10,000,000 tons, while our navy leads the world. How has it

all come about? Because of the protecting care of the Almighty! All the facts of history prove that it is so.

In 1588 the mighty Spanish Armada set sail to destroy England. It comprised 130 ships, many of immense size, manned by 28,000 men. Against them could only be mustered 101 ships, only 28 properly equipped for fighting. The people seemed helpless. Disaster seemed unavoidable. But deliverance came. A storm arose, which just annihilated completely the invading fleets. In 1652 Van Tromp was going to sweep the English from the seas. But again a storm dispersed the ships. In 1719 the combined French and Spanish fleets attempted the invasion of England. Once more a mighty storm sent their hopes to the bottom of the sea. In 1744 Sir Robert Walpole said then "that nothing but the wind saved the nation." Again, in 1779, France and Spain combined to crush England, but a pestilent disease attacked their sailors, and their fleet thus became an easy prey to the English.

And what a history it has been! Speaking generally, no other nation has been more ready to fall in with the Divine purposes. For instance, Germany translated the Bible into one language—her own. Britain has translated it into well over 400, and British missionaries are in every part of the earth. No nation in the past had been more loyal in the observance of the Sabbath. The Bible and the observing of the day of rest were certainly behind England's real past greatness.

In all that has just been said there is not the least intention of suggesting that all the British people, at any time, ever have been out and out followers of Jesus Christ. Only a proportion of them ever have been that. Yet certain conditions have frequently tended to make this nation seem to be more flexible in regard to the outworking of Divine purpose than, perhaps, in the case of many others of the nations. For instance, at the time of the Protestant Reformation, it can be sincerely affirmed that Britain emerged farther out of the darkness of Romanism than was then done by any other nation. The Protestant Faith became the religion of the land. The Bible, as God's Word, came into the position of supreme authority. Not even the humblest village was complete without a church. And, while many of the people

may have honored God with their lips, while their hearts were far from Him, yet in all the councils of the nation there was always surely a godly remnant, the influence of which was ever in the Godward direction. And, after all, it is always the little handful of God's people that are as the salt of the earth. So that, for many centuries, nationally, at least, Britain has been a Christian nation, and because of that fact has consequently enjoyed much of the Divine favor. But, one wonders, if such can now be truly said of either the British nation or of any of the young lions thereof! For, truly, all that has just been said, might as easily have been spoken in regard to the United States, and every other offspring of the British nation as well. The apparent departure from God is truly appalling. Back into the spiritual darkness of Romanism is now the drift of national religion. The great majority of the Anglican Church leaders are now confessedly ashamed of the great outstanding, Reformation principles. It was only a vote of the British House of Commons that recently prevented acceptance by the national Church of that, which surely was intended to divert the whole people with a much greater rapidity, than hitherto, Romewards.

While many of the religious leaders, who are not heading for Rome, are just as surely, unashamedly, diverting the rest of the people in the direction of stark, hopeless infidelity. The very Scriptures which certainly were the real basis of Britain's past greatness, now, by highly placed ecclesiastics, are being assailed as being immoral, grotesque, hideous, and unfitted for public use. The inevitable consequence of such wicked propaganda is that the people generally seem now to be rapidly drifting into a condition of religious indifference, while a considerable proportion of the people are even becoming positively antagonistic to the Faith of their fathers. Schools and colleges are really anti-Christian. Godless pleasure, immorality, divorce and licentious philosophies are now almost universally in evidence. How is it all going to end? Well, we are very plainly told how in God's Word. The present condition of things is to consummate in Divine judgment. Every circumstance in regard to that judgment is given the clearest possible description in the Prophetic Scripture.

The Judgment of Tarshish.

All the nations are to experience the Divine judgment. Some of them will not survive the awful experience. Others of them will.

History furnishes clearest proofs of the solemn fact that national sins, and national indifference to the claims of Almighty God, if persisted in after adequate warning, are invariably followed by Divine visitations in the form of national judgments. We see the truth of this principle in the flood which came in Noah's day, the confusion of tongues at Babel, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. Listen also to the Divine, terrific utterance concerning the punishment of Jerusalem when its people were being given over to the same sins as are now so manifest in our Empire. "They walked not in my statutes, and they despised my judgments . . . and my Sabbath they greatly polluted. Then I said I would pour out my fury upon them . . . to consume them" (Ezek., 20: 13).

It was the moral degeneration of Greece and Rome, the whole world knows, that brought about their ruin. Ancient Egypt, Assyria, and Babylon all came to decay and extinction through the destruction of their sensualities.

It is in the second chapter of the Prophet Isaiah that the impending judgment of modern nations has definite Divine description. That is the chapter which tells us of the glorious reign of Christ over all the nations of the Millennial earth. The nations are not now ready for such blessedness. They could be ready for it, if there was only universal acceptance of the Gospel of Christ. This the nations never have given, and never will, according to the teaching of the Scriptures. There is not the least indication of such a blessed condition anywhere now. The people never seemed further away from the God of Divine revelation, since that time the Gospel first began to have its way among men, than now.

How then is the world to be brought into subjection to the Holy Will of God? Only, now, in one way. According to the Divine Scriptures it is to be through fearful judgment. In connection with the appearing of God's Christ to the world, in glorious majesty, in verse 10 of Isaiah 2, there is surely given a most impressive appeal to mankind. It is.

as it were, the last solemn call. "Enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of His majesty."

Yes, this is surely a kind of final Divine appeal, concerning the time, when the long impending Divine judgment is about to break. For, "The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. For the Day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low."

Then, in verse 16, the Tarshish nation is specifically mentioned as being in this particular Divine judgment. Britain's mighty ships have often been referred to by Britishers as being the Empire's first line of defence. It would seem to be especially in this connection, that the weight of judgment will be first felt. The Prophet says that "the Day of the Lord shall be upon all the ships of Tarshish, and upon all pleasant pictures."

I have sometimes wondered if this last reference is not related to the well-nigh universal fascination of the cinema, which now has a very large place in the lives of the people. At anyrate, all the ships of Tarshish are to be in the judgment. It is precisely the same condition that finds expression in Isaiah, 23-24: "Howl, ye ships of Tarshish, for your strength is laid waste."

The connection here would suggest, that just as the ancient commercial city of Tyre came to be under the Divine judgment, so is it to be with the Tarshish nation.

The chapter immediately preceding shows it to be just about when Christ is to sit down on the throne of David to reign over the house of Israel. The twenty-third verse says that "He shall be for a glorious throne to His father's house, and they shall hang upon Him all the glory of His father's house." And the twenty-fourth chapter clearly states that the time of this Tarshish judgment will also be that period of greatest tribulation this world has ever before known or will ever know again. The Saviour often spoke about that period of awful world suffering. Daniel also says that then "there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation." Jeremiah graphically de-

scribes human anguish then: "Wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail, and all faces turned into paleness." Isaiah shows the fearful effects of this time of judgment: "Behold, the Lord maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof."

It is therefore some time about coincident with such dread happenings that terrific judgment will come upon our Tarshish nation. "Pass ye over to Tarshish," says the Prophet. "Howl, ye inhabitants of the isle." "The Lord of hosts hath purposed it, to stain the pride of all glory, and to bring into contempt all the honorable of the earth. Pass through the land, O daughter of Tarshish; there is no more strength. He stretched out His hand over the sea, He shook the kingdoms: the Lord hath given a commandment concerning the merchant city to destroy the stronghold thereof." Then is given a clear reference to our maritime greatness, and the manner of judgment in that respect: "Howl, ye ships of Tarshish; for your strength is laid waste."

This is not by any means the only Bible reference to this terrific tragedy of the sea in relation to the commerce of Tarshish. The forty-eighth Psalm is also another of those thrilling descriptions of the coming glorious reign of Christ over the earth, from Mount Zion, the city of God's glory. There also is pictured the kings assembled and the awful trouble that will come upon them. And in that connection it is declared, concerning this period of God's judgment, "Thou breakest the ships of Tarshish with an east wind." So that the sins of the Tarshish nation are surely to have terrific judgment.

Tarshish in the Millennium.

Yet, here is a very wonderful thing! After the time of judgment is ended, and Christ is on the Throne, this Tarshish nation is to have a distinct place among the saved nations of the Millennial earth. The thing is plainly stated in the seventy-second Psalm, which has all to do with the wonderful time when the glorified saints of Christ are to reign with Him for the thousand years. It is in verse ten, we are told how, that, when the Lord is reigning as King of kings, "The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: the

kings of Sheba and Seba shall serve Him. Yea, all kings shall bow down before Him: all nations shall serve Him."

But, it certainly will only be those persons who will have been found worthy that will then have a place in any of the Millennial nations. Our Lord Himself has definitely stated what is to happen just at the inauguration of the Millennial kingdom. "The Son of man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His Kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity." (Matt., 13-41.)

I think that the Divine judgments, described in the Scriptures, already considered, really have to do with that casting out of the workers of iniquity from the glorious Kingdom that then is about to be set up. Not any of this judgment, though, has anything whatever to do with those who are now believing in Christ unto salvation. For before anything of such judgment can eventuate every believer will have been caught up in the glorious rapture, and afterwards will reign with Christ in His Glorious Kingdom. Two will be in the field together, the one is to be taken, the other left. Only those found ready will then enter in through the open door unto the Blessed Presence. All the unbelievers of every nation will then be left to the awful sifting, Divine judgments. Christ is surely soon to come.

The great event is near. Everything now happening, in regard to the Tarshish nation, Britain, like, in regard to all other signs of the Times, has strongly convinced a host of believing souls that the Coming of the Redeemer for His believing people is right near at hand. He said it plainly: "When these things begin to come to pass, look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh."

As we have seen, all through this study, the Tarshish nation is a sign. It is also a solemn warning for all to be ready for the next phase of Divine expression.

Are you ready?

I beseech you, be ye reconciled to God. Now!

CHAPTER V.

The Sign of Abounding Iniquity.

"Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold." (Matt., 24-12.)

These are the words of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. They were spoken in answer to the question of His disciples, as to what would be the sign of the end when He would be coming again. They distinctly relate to the closing days of this Gospel Age. So that, in regard to them, three questions now arise. Though, in the clear light of the solemn words here given, there should really be no need whatever for any kind of question. Still, here are the three, for us now to be answered:

1. How is this Gospel Age going to end?
2. Is this old world really getting better?
3. Do universal conditions indicate that all humanity is now well on the road to a better relationship with God?

Yes, indeed, these are real questions, and of a vital importance to every one of us. Though, perhaps, there are not really many people sufficiently interested to concern themselves in such matters, yet are there some who are. Visit the churches, and a host of preachers will assure you that everything is now moving beautifully, upwards. Oh, yes, "God is in His Heaven, and all is well with the world." It is even being cheerily affirmed that ever since the close of the Great War, the whole of mankind has been only going steadily forward towards the radiant light of eternal righteousness. And it is also said that world-wide improvement is only what should be expected from the growing influence of Gospel ministry. Indeed, one preacher tells how that, "We have it assured to us in the Words of God, not only

that this world is yet to be made beautiful and blessed, but that from the planting of Christianity onwards there should be, on the whole, a steady progress in that direction."

These are surely fine words, but they are not true. Indeed, they are actually false. There are no Words of God anywhere signifying that from the planting of Christianity onward there was to be a steady progress towards a blessed and beautiful world. Nor ever do the preachers who say this kind of thing give any proof texts in confirmation. Rather, when questioned for Divine authority as to any such theory, these will scarcely hesitate to affirm that it is not at all a question of texts. What is it then? Well, it is rather a question of general impression or opinion.

But here is something that must now be very definitely affirmed. It is this. The things that relate to the eternal cannot be matters for personal opinion at any time. The importance of such things is so terrific. And in regard to everything relating to God, and the things that are yet to be, we are entirely dependent always and only upon Divine revelation. As the Apostle said, "The judgments of God are unsearchable, and His ways are past finding out." "There is no searching of His understanding." God must speak, else we cannot know. And, "God, Who at sundry times and in divers manners spake unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son." It is that we are told.

And it is altogether enough! God has spoken! So that the mere opinions of men count for nothing in regard to the great solemn matters of life and being. In what God has made known, we have all we need. But when the professional teachers of God's Word, on its sacred authority, say things that are not therein to be found, then they are truly guilty of doing a very great wrong. They are bearing a false witness. And it may well have been of such, surely, the Lord Himself spoke, when He foretold, that "Many false prophets were to rise, and should deceive many." John, the Apostle, also affirmed the same thing, when he said that "Many false prophets are gone out into the world." And Peter also clearly said of God's Word, that "The Prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by

the Holy Ghost." And the same Apostle also testified to it, like the others: "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them and bring upon themselves swift destruction." And this same Apostle of Christ, under direct Divine inspiration, pours out his soul, in earnest warning in regard to God's dear people, and the Last Days: "This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance: that ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour." And it was concerning Gospel ministry in the world Paul also said, that while for some it would be a savor of life unto life, for others it would be a savor of death unto death.

My reader, we are surely in the Last Days, when many are turning away their ears from the Truth of God, and are now being turned unto fables. Take no notice of the opinions of men! For "Ye do well that ye take heed in your hearts unto the sure Word of Prophecy, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the Day dawn, and the Day star arise."

What the Bible Teaches.

I mean, what does the Bible show, in regard to what the world's moral condition was to be, at the close of this Gospel Age? Kindly notice, that I say "Age," not "world." It is not the end of the world, we Christian people are to have now in view. For, according to all the teaching of God's Word, the world is to go on for a very long while, after the last believer has entered the eternal salvation. There is altogether too much misunderstanding among people, who ought to know better, in regard to such matters. But there is no intelligent student of the Scriptures, waiting now for the coming of the Lord from Heaven, who ever thinks that the end of the world is near at hand. The Bible position is this, as everybody should know, that as God in the beginning divided the week up into seven days, and the day into twenty-four hours, even so has He, from the beginning, divided the history of His dealings with this earth, and the process of His scheme for the redemption of a fallen race,

into so many different "ages," or "dispensations," as they are spoken of in the Bible. There is a series of clearly-defined Ages. In Ep., 3-3, Paul writes of the Church, the one body of Christ, as being a mystery which was not known **in other Ages.** In Eph., 2-7, we read of something that God is going to do in **the Ages to come.** In Heb., 9-26, we read that once **in the end of the Age** Christ has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.

So that from these Scriptures we clearly learn that there are certain divisions of time, called Ages. We also learn that there are other Ages that will follow this present one. And we can see that the first coming of Christ was really the end of an Age, and consequently the beginning of another Age, this very Gospel Age, or dispensation, in which we now are.

A Misunderstanding Explained.

It was not the end of the world the Apostles were inquiring about in their questioning of our Lord, on the Mount of Olives. I do hope you will have that well in mind. Unfortunately, the Divine plan of the Ages has been obscured, to many, because the translators rendered the Greek word for "age" as "world," as in our present text and in a few other places in the Scriptures. But the revised version, in the margin, has set it right. Not "world," but "age," is how the word should be rendered in the following quotations: "The harvest is the end of the Age." "I am with you alway, even unto the end of the Age." As a proof of my contention, if the reader will look up Ephesians, 2-7, and Colossians, 1-26, he will find precisely the same word in both cases rendered "ages." So as the revised version puts it, what the Apostles then wanted to know about was, "The sign of the Consummation of the Age."

And here is a statement concerning a self-evident fact. Every feature in the records regarding both sacred and secular history confirm it. This is, that EACH AGE ENDS IN HUMAN FAILURE.

Oh, yes! Every past Age has ended in failure on the part of man. In the Age which terminated with the passing away of the condition of innocence in which man was first created, and the entrance of sin into the world, we know how dreadful was man's failure. It is easy to know when

that Age begun and when it ended. And it is just as easy to know when every other succeeding Age begun and ended by the change that took place in the character of God's dealings with men. We see how different these conditions were from Adam to Noah to what they were before man's fall. Tragic failure again happened, so that it is told us that "God looked upon the earth which was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence." The first Age ended with the Divine judgment of sin; the second ended with the flood. The succeeding Age of the Patriarchs ended in a League of nations and its scattering to all parts of the earth.

Then God called Abraham, to found a nation whose number was promised to become as the sand of the seashore. Thus began a new dispensation in regard to God's dealings with men. That dispensation ended also with the failure and rejection of Israel and with the Sacrifice of Christ. This present Age then commenced. In it we see a new method by which God is dealing with mankind. No longer is it necessary for the smoke of the morning sacrifice to ascend up to Heaven. The Sacrifice of the Eternal Son of Almighty God has been offered up once for all, by which all men may know their sins forgiven and themselves be reconciled unto their Maker. God's present method is simplicity itself. For 1900 years the Gospel of grace has been proclaimed in the world. Anyone, anywhere, may now be saved from all sin through faith in the Crucified Son of God. The same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him. Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord will be saved. The door has been open wide for nineteen hundred years so that anybody can now enter. Behold, now is the accepted time! Behold, now is the day of salvation!

There always have at least been some who have accepted that Gospel. But the majority of men have invariably rejected it. This is indeed their condemnation. They have refused to believe the record God has given of His Son. Then, is this Age of free grace to go on for ever? Certainly not, for we read of Ages that are to yet to come. As soon as the number of all those who will believe is complete, the Church will be caught away to be with the Lord, and then this Age will end. Another Age, with entirely

different features, will then have been commenced. It is not that the world will have ended. There will be plenty of world after this Age ends. The special feature of our Age now is that all men everywhere may repent of their sins, and through simple faith in the Divine Son of God may now be saved. After this Age, it is by judgments the Almighty will deal with the world. For "the harvest is the end of the Age," when the reapers will bind the tares in bundles to burn them, but will gather the wheat into the Lord's barn.

So then, as the other Ages, or periods of time, have passed, so also will this Age. It had a definite beginning, and also will have a definite end. Many in the Churches have forgotten this simple truth. It is indeed one of the great devices of Satan to make us forget that the end is coming. Somehow, men are made to feel as if they were to live for ever, and as if this Age would never pass. If men thought more of the end, how different would be their lives! But that end is now surely near at hand. It is not the end of the world, but the end of the Age we are looking for. That new Age, that is soon coming, will be called the Day of the Lord, and cannot take place, according to the Scriptures, until two definite conditions have been fulfilled. The first is, that there must be fearful apostasy, a great falling away. The second is, that the man of sin, the Son of Perdition, the Antichrist, who is to claim the divine honor, which rightly belongs only to Christ, must be revealed. These two things happen at the end of our Age, according to Paul's testimony to the Thessalonians, and that of many other Scriptures as well.

Now, these last paragraphs have been taken from my book, "Great Future Events." Having already said these things, there seems no need to say them all over again. And, by bringing them in here, nothing further has to be said, concerning what the Bible teaches, regarding the world's moral condition, now, in the closing days of this Age. So clear is all of this, on every sacred page, that one really wonders how any single person can ever be found willing to listen to preachers who say, on the authority of "God's words," that from the planting of Christianity, there is to be a steady progress towards a blessed and

beautiful world. Those who say it, not only make false the words of our Redeemer Lord, but also those of every Divinely inspired writer as well.

Christendom's Strange Development.

The inspired account of this was clearly stated before the actual unfolding began. We have first of all the mystic expression given in regard to the ultimate result of all Gospel ministry in the world. In the hearing of the people, the Lord first showed what was to be, but only then in the language of parable. "And the disciples came, and said unto Him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, but to them it is not given." (Matt., 13-10, 11.)

The disciples represented all believers. It is therefore evident that, in regard to the understanding of the results of Gospel preaching in the world, right down to the close of the Age, a knowledge is given God's people that others cannot receive. May that not be an explanation of why so many preachers are now found teaching what is so definitely contrary to everything in God's Word? "To them it is not given." "I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and earth," said the Blessed Son, "because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemeth good in Thy sight." (Matt., 11-25.)

The first of the seven parables of the Kingdom tells of the Sower, Who went forth to sow and scattered His Seed, the Gospel, everywhere. Some fell on the hard wayside. Such, the Devil, represented by the fowls, soon devoured. Also on the stony ground fell the good Seed. Here were indications of promise, but through having no depth, when trouble came, there was a withering up and death. Other Seed fell among thorns. The thorns, which are the cares of this world and the love of riches, springing up, choked any possibility of fruit. The Seed which fell into the good ground produced fruit in varying proportions, some a hundred-fold, some sixty-fold, and some thirty-fold.

That is the ratio, the Lord said, the Gospel would be received. And there never has been a time, in all the history of Gospel ministry, when the Message of life has any-

where had greater reception. Not even now does more than one-fourth of the total world's population make even a pretence of honoring Christ. That also only is in harmony with the great Gospel commission as given to the disciples, the terms of which are frankly stated. "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved: but he that believeth not shall be damned."

The Gospel and Civilisation.

It is here quite evident that the Gospel was not given just to civilize the world. Whatever the beneficent influences that may have accompanied Gospel ministry, the Son of God did not die on Calvary, only that mankind's general condition should be improved. His servants were never set apart from other people to be a society of social reformers. Not a thing did Christ ever have to say in regard to art, science, politics or legislation. Standing before great Caesar's representative, just one thing did our Lord say. It was: "My kingdom is not of this world."

It was to seek and to save the lost, the Son of God came among men. And to seek and to save lost souls is the only true business in this world of every true servant of Christ now. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." And the faithful preacher only says of himself, "I am become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some." And this saving of souls only comes through the Gospel as it was given first by the Lord. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God."

Wheat and Tares.

In the parable of the tares the Lord showed what would happen in regard to Christendom. A Man sowed good Seed in His field. While men slept the enemy sowed tares. When the wheat came up, so also did the tares. His servants desired to know what was to be done. They both are to grow together until the harvest. Then will the Lord send forth His servants, who will gather the wheat into His barn, but the tares will be for burning. The Lord then affirms, how that the good Seed are the children of the Kingdom. The others are the children of the Devil. The

harvest is the end of the Age, the time when the angels of God are to eternally separate the one from the other. Never is there the least suggestion here of wide-world blessedness.

The Mustard Tree.

Again, in the third of the parables is carefully given the Divine forecast of Christendom right down to the end. A mustard tree in its beginning is the smallest of plants. A man takes a mustard seed, the smallest of all seeds, and sows it in his field. It becomes so great in its ultimate development that the birds of the air find shelter therein. And whatever could have been so small and insignificant and less likely to affect the condition of the world than the beginning of the Christian religion? The first believers were few and so poor that then the world could well deride their mission. It was thought by its enemies that the killing of its Founder and a few of His apostles would stamp out the whole thing. But no doubt the abnormally rapid growth of the mustard tree is stated to indicate what afterwards happened in the ultimate development of Christendom. It should not be forgotten that as the tree sends out its branches it also sends its roots in exact proportion into the earth. So then, you see, the abnormal growth of the mustard tree was evidently used to indicate a marvellous, unhealthy development that was to take place ultimately in Christendom. It was not, however, to be for good. No one can possibly claim that the acceptance of Christianity by the Emperor Constantine and the nationalizing of religion which followed was according to the desires of the Almighty. You cannot make Christians by the compulsions of human law. All who follow Christ must do it of their own free will. Christianity became the religion of the nations, but the nations did not become Christian thereby. The tree became great in the earth, and the birds of the air found a shelter therein.

Now these are precisely the same birds as those of the first parable, and which our Lord said represented the WICKED ONE, even the Devil. Therefore the only meaning we can take, is that the wicked powers of the first parable, who devoured the good Seed as soon as it was sown, were ultimately to find a lodging place in the branches of Christendom, after it had become a great tree. Thus the

evident intention of the parable is clear—that great thing in the world which is called Christianity was to become the shelter, the refuge, the dwelling place of the Devil as well as of the Son of God. He who reads the history of the development of Christendom must recognise how exactly accurate was the Lord's forecast of what has actually happened in the world. Think on the fearful errors that have crept into our religion, and how terribly corrupted is the vision of men; the sin and wickedness fostered by the authority of the so-called Church, the persecutions of which it has been guilty, the awful tortures inflicted upon those who refused to bow to its dreadful claims. When we read of all these and the many other terrible things done in the name of Christianity, we cannot but recognise that the Evil One has indeed found a lodging place in the great tree called the Church.

Corruption of Christendom.

Here is a strange thing. It is in regard to the fourth of the great parables by which our Lord shows what was to happen in this Age. The parable of the Leaven has actually been made to mean the very opposite to what the Lord evidently intended. Everywhere in the Scripture, meal invariably is the type of life and only of what is good, while leaven, just as distinctly, is the invariable type of evil. It was because of that, the disciples were warned to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Scribes. They were similarly exhorted to beware of the leaven of Herod, which surely stood for vileness and wickedness. While the Apostle Paul presents leaven as symbolic of the errors of Judaism, which, even in Christianity's earliest days, was being brought into Christianity, to the detriment of those who had received the Gospel. On another occasion the same Apostle spoke of leaven as being just malice and wickedness. Why then should it ever be imagined that, when the Lord spoke of a woman working leaven into meal until the whole would become leavened, He wanted us to think that the leaven is the blessed Gospel, while the meal stands for a wicked world, which, somehow, was to attain salvation by the Gospel? Yet that is the only Scripture, those who say the world is yet to receive the Gospel, are ever able to give in support of their astonishing assumption. Why, they

themselves are represented by that "woman"! For the woman is the Divinely-given symbol of all unfaithful preachers injecting their own ideas into the precious Gospel, which a gracious God has given for the saving of all who truly receive it. And it is certainly that which actually has happened. I am not now specially thinking of Romanism, in regard to the corruption of Divine Truth, but rather of what has happened in regard to an equally corrupt Protestantism. For only in a comparatively few Churches, now, is the saving Gospel, Christ gave His disciples to give to every creature, being preached. Multitudes listen to sermons, from one year's end to another, in which there is not one particle of that Gospel which is the power of God unto salvation to them that believe. In regard to many of the Churches, such is the character of the preaching, now being given, that the people are surely coming to feel they are all right for eternity, whether or no they either attend Church, or give the slightest heed to the things God has made known in His Holy Word. Why go to Church anyway, if the Book, on which all true religion is based, is as unreliable and as unauthoritative as the modern preachers are now making the Bible out to be? There is no other reliable revelation concerning what is to be, available, outside of the Holy Scriptures. Destroy the authority of God's Word and religion has lost its vital appeal. It must be, that it is because the preachers are themselves doing that very thing, that the fearful drift away from the Churches is now going on. Concerning all such Sardis preachers, God has spoken from Heaven, "I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead."

The Three Final Parables.

The first of these is that of the Hid treasure. There is an interpretation of this parable that makes the buyer of the field to be a sinner, seeking Christ. But there is not the least warrant for such interpretation. The field is shown to be the world. The sinner does not buy Christ, but to enter the Divine salvation he has to forsake the world, an entirely different thing. The sinner has nothing to sell and Christ is not to be bought, nor is Christ hid in a field, neither having found Christ, does the sinner hide Him again.

The true interpretation is, that the Lord is the Buyer, or Redeemer of the field, which is the world. Israel is the peculiar treasure unto God, that has therein been long hid. But a time is coming when all Israel is to be saved. That is, because of Christ's redemption, and the time of it is, as all Scripture shows, at the return of Christ to this world.

The parable of the Pearl of Great Price relates to the Church which Christ redeemed with His own blood. The Church is a mystery, "which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, and which in other Ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto His holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit." "Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it . . . that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."

The pearl is truly a perfect symbol of the Church, in regard to its unity. A pearl is formed by accretion, not mechanically, but vitally, through a living one. That is how the true Church is now being formed, amidst the apostasies of Christendom, and is also being prepared, for its wonderful place in the coming glory of the Lord.

The last of the seven parables conclusively shows, that the world is not to be converted in this Age. The kingdom of Heaven, now, is like unto a net that is being cast into the sea of humanity. It gathers in of every kind, bad and good. The bad and the good remain together in the net, not in the sea, until the end of the Age. The net therefore would seem to represent Christendom. But it is not, therefore, either a converted net, nor is it a converted sea. Again is it stated that it is at the end of the Age the angels shall come forth to separate the wicked from the just.

So, then, the Lord's meaning in regard to the seven parables, as illustrating the outstanding features of this Gospel Age, must now be quite apparent. Christian profession has come to be a mingled body of true and false, good and bad, wheat and tares, while in the midst of all this conglomeration of profession are the true believers unto salvation, who at the time of their Lord's return are then going to "shine forth as the sun." And that only is

how it is to be, right through to the end of this Gospel Age, according to Christ's own teaching. Nothing else but just that, is to be found anywhere in God's Word. But rather is it plainly taught that the end is to be worse than the beginning!

The Divine Forecast.

In His last great discourse, what the Lord taught, in regard to Christendom's ultimate unfolding, is exactly the opposite of the things now being said by modern preachers. Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21, all give us the entire Divine forecast. The Lord shows therein that warlike condition would characterize the whole Age, growing worse and worse right through to the time of the end. Far from sin diminishing as the Age progressed, the Lord showed that in the end, because of abounding iniquity, the love of many Christians would grow cold. Far from ever teaching that His servants would vanquish the world by the power of His Word, He said: "Suppose ye when the Son of man cometh, He shall find faith on the earth?" What He told them was that "As the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not till the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." And in the days before the flood, we are definitely told, how "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of his heart was only evil continually."

Jesus Christ definitely said it, that so shall it be in Christendom at the end of this Gospel Age.

Again, He told how that, "The same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from Heaven and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be when the Son of man is revealed from Heaven." Why? Because as it was in Sodom, so shall it be among men, when Jesus Christ comes. The judgment of God is surely coming on this world. So that the preachers who say that the world is progressing towards God, so that no judgment is coming, are traitors in regard to the solemn trust laid upon them.

The Apostolic Testimony.

Concerning the last days, only the same thing is ever said by the inspired Apostles as that we have seen so clearly affirmed by their Lord. According to Paul, the last days are to be perilous times. Men are then to be blasphemers, unthankful, unholy, incontinent and without even natural affection. They shall be lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God, and shall have the form of godliness, while denying the power thereof. Religious authorities, then, are to turn away their ears from the Truth, and deny the sacred authority of the Holy Scriptures, while evil men and seducers are to wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived. The modern preachers should give earnest heed to the things inspired of God! This is their ultimate description, otherwise, "Many shall come to Me in that day and shall say: Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy Name? Then will I answer them, I never knew you: depart from Me, ye that work iniquity."

The Apostle James speaks of the Last Day revolutionary conditions that are to fill the earth with misery. Peter tells of scoffers in the last days, walking after their own lusts and deriding the possibility of the coming again of Christ from Heaven, and also depicts the fearful Divine judgment that is surely coming.

Jude, after describing the ungodly men creeping into the Church unawares, and turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, and also going into the way of Cain, goes on to repeat Enoch's great prophecy: "Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed."

The beloved John also testifies how the whole world now lies in the embrace of the wicked one, and all through the last book in the Bible, the same Apostle is given of God to portray the awful time of Divine judgment that is surely coming upon every rejector of the Gospel.

No preacher living has any authority to say anything different to what is in God's Word; in not one sentence of which is it ever suggested that the world is to be converted

to God in this Age. Those who are saying anything like that are teaching false doctrine, which will cause multitudes to be swept away into final destruction.

Who Is to Blame?

That is, is it God Who is to blame, because of the ultimate climax of evil and its consequent judgment? Surely no sensible person can ever think that! The world is now filled with terrible things. War, lust, murder, crime, lying, deceit, passion, hatred and thousands of other enormities everywhere permeate human experience. Is it because the great God desires that these things should be? It seems folly even to mention such a thing! There never has been an evil of any kind that could not be traced right back to a wilful turning away from the revealed Will of God. The Holy Scriptures show all through, the Deity warning, pleading and entreating, individuals and nations alike, regarding the sure consequences of wrongdoing. In the Bible is clearly shown the Way of Life, as also is the way of death, and whatever is the Blessed Book but a constant exhortation to work righteousness, to forsake evil, to love one another, to bear each other's burdens, to make all life a blessing, and then to enter freely through the door that leads unto eternal blessedness. And to those who have come to the knowledge of the Divine grace in regard to the great salvation, there is really nothing more wonderful in the whole economy of human experience, than in regard to the relationship between God and the sinner. Because of sin, man is under the condemnation of death. There is no escape. But God makes possible salvation and a life that is eternal. All through, it is God that seeks to save the sinner, rather than it is that the sinner seeks to be saved. Through persistent folly, men and women come to be absolutely impotent in regard to sin. Yet, even to the most helpless of such, assurance is given, that God through Christ will save to the very uttermost. A host of enfranchised souls, through acceptance of the Divine grace, have proved the all-sufficiency of it. But, the others just reject all the overtures of the great God. They will not come, that they might have life. They prefer the broad road and destruction. And so, as we have seen, it will continue to be, right through to the end. So that, "as in the days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marry-

ing and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and knew not until the Flood came, and took them all away: so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Universal conditions are like that now. The world, generally speaking, seems rapidly losing all moral sense.

Growing Worse.

That is in regard to God and the eternal, the human race is going down. And strange to say, the Modernist preachers, in many instances, are helping greatly the universal drift from God. How? By their denials and negations in regard to Divine revelation. Destroy the authority of the Bible, and the declivity hellwards accelerates. "Hath God said," has always been the Devil's primary instrument, from the beginning, in regard to the subversion of souls. And for more than two generations now, the so-called Modernists in Christendom, not only have insinuated general doubt regarding everything in the Holy Scriptures, but have also widely disseminated the awful Satanic lie: "Thou shalt not surely die."

The preponderating majority of preachers now are more or less Modernists.

Here is the testimony of a great Free Church leader in England, one responsible for the training of preachers, Dr. W. B. Selbie, Principal of Mansfield College, Oxford, in the "Christian World," June 21, 1928:

"So far as the whole question of Biblical criticism is concerned, I think it may be said that the whole of the Free Churches are entirely Modernist, with the exception of a small wing of Fundamentalists. We should no more dream of framing our theology by the Nicene Creed than by some Hindu form of belief. We do not mind being descended from monkeys."

Is it any wonder, then, that we read in our newspapers of what is happening in gatherings of ministers? Such reference as the following is now indeed appallingly frequent:

"BIBLE ATTACKED BY A MINISTER.

"Old Testament of No Value.

"Astonishing attacks on the Bible were made at the Congregational Conference held at Oxford recently. The Old Testament was referred to as a book which 'should not be

put into a child's hands,' and which could be dispensed with.'

" 'In the ordinary home of to-day,' said a member, 'the Bible is as obsolete as the antimacassar.

" 'I doubt whether you could find a Bible now in 20 per cent. of the homes of working people.'

"NEGLIGIBLE.

"The Rev. John Bevan, of Balham, said:

" 'There would be no great harm done if many parts of the Old Testament were lost to the sight of men, and preserved only in museums or for the delectation of students. Their religious value is negligible; in fact, they have never been of the least help to true religion. The Old Testament is not a children's book, and should not be put into a child's hands. The child is not able to grasp the religious significance of it, and the result is that it just bores him stiff because it deals with a world he knows nothing about.

" 'We should tell our congregations quite frankly that the history in the Bible has no more bearing on religious truth than any other history.

"The Old Testament could be dispensed with, but it would be unwise to accustom ourselves to the thought of the Christian religion apart from its ancestry.'

"When a secular newspaper calls attention to infidelity found in the pulpit, it is time such ministers had the common honesty, in our humble opinion, to get out of the ministry, or join the host of blatant infidels."

That last clause was the heartfelt expression of a godly man. But the pulpit infidels are not going to get out. Some of them certainly have considerable popularity. For we are in the last days and the people love to have things as they are. Iniquity abounds and the love of many has waxed cold.

The Churches Are Going Down.

This condition is being universally admitted. Recently, the Rev. J. D. Jones, of Bournemouth, England, said that 90 per cent. of Britain's manhood is right outside of the Churches. While, in the "British Weekly," it was later affirmed, that in a certain district only one man in a hundred attended the ministry of any of the Churches.

The investigators regarding Church attendances in London, under the auspices of the "British Weekly," found, in regard to 180 Protestant Churches, in working-class areas, that during the last 25 years there had been a drop of one-half, and of two-thirds during the last forty years. That is, regarding the 180 Churches investigated, three persons once attended them for every one that does now.

In South London, capacious Chapels were found practically deserted. Five great Noncomformist Churches in Central London, with sittings for 6500 people, had 1000. In one large Church, there were 17 women and children and four men. The most disquieting circumstance was, that the small existing congregations are found to be extremely elderly. The future is not promising, considering that the attendances are falling rapidly, there being, to-day, 1,663,000 fewer scholars than in 1906.

Mr. Aldous Huxley thinks we are living now in what is probably the most irreligious epoch of all history. The Bishop of Worcester says that whereas his predecessors used to ordain 150 priests in one day, he in the course of eight years has only ordained thirty-five. Crockford's Clerical Directory declares that "the backbone of the Church is being broken, and that in ten years' time, if the present conditions continue, the Church of England will have ceased to exist as a parochial system."

And it is said that many of the Churches are simply a sort of social club, with the minister as chief organiser. Consequently, it may be that the Roman Catholic priest was not very far wrong, in what he recently wrote about many so-called Protestant Churches. He said:

"There was a time when Protestants believed something and taught something. That time has gone by, except for the Lutherans and a few others. Protestant Churches are mainly social organisations, with all sorts of clubs and activities, recreational and pleasure programmes, with a little spiritual seasoning in the form of a denatured Church service and a haphazard Sunday school meeting thrown in. The heart of the Church service is the music, with an exhortation to goodness or moral conduct, or a discussion of some social problem or economic situation, in the form of a sermon. What is the result? Protestant people are spiritually starved. Ninety-nine out of a hundred cannot tell even

the most elementary things which they believe as distinctly Protestant. They are not being taught anything. The result is that the only hold upon them is loyalty to an organisation, not religious conviction."

So that in regard to these two features alone, the destruction of the authority of the Bible, and the awful falling away from the Churches, there is no reason to believe the world is getting better, but rather worse.

The desolation of faith that is coming into the experience of those who are not dealing well with God's Word, finds terrible illustration from the experience of Dr. Marcus Dodds, a while before he passed away. He wrote: "I used to enjoy prayer, but for years I have found myself dumb. I wish I could live to be a spectator through the next generation to see what they are going to make of things. The Churches won't know themselves fifty years hence. It is to be hoped some little rag of faith may be left when all is done. For my own part, I am sometimes entirely under water, and see no sky at all."

The Passion for Pleasure.

The awful drift from God is further seen in the inordinate, almost universal passion for pleasure. Paul wrote of the last days, as being, when the people will love their pleasures more than they love God. Not ever before has there been a more exact fulfilment of Prophetic statement. Never in all history has there ever been such facility for pleasure. The whole universe is being feverishly searched for carnal novelty. Many millions of pounds sterling are invested in the Cinema, to which far more than one hundred million persons go every week. In the city of Liverpool, it was found that in a single day 13,000 children under thirteen years of age visited the Cinema. As was said by Dr. Torrey, "there is probably no institution that is doing more in our day to corrupt the morals both of old and young than the movies. A very large proportion of the movie plays exploit vice in its worst forms. They are attended by young men and young women at the most critical period of their lives. They arouse the vilest thoughts and passions. They appeal increasingly to that which is lowest and basest. They are proving the ruin of thousands of young men and women throughout the land, and are having a thorough

demoralising effect even upon men and women of maturer years."

Perhaps the most wicked pictures shown are those that are supposed to give instruction regarding sex problems and to which the sexes are only admitted separately. In regard to them, are enacted quite openly certain conditions of carnal experience that pertain to the lowest class of brothel. Whether men are alone, or women are alone, to see such things, the result is inevitably the same always, the setting on fire of the passion that burns. The whole condition is an abomination, and it is to such the crowd now goes. The managers say they only give the people what they want. And that surely is so. We are in the time, foretold by Jesus Christ. Because iniquity abounds the love of God and the holy life waxes cold.

In regard to the so-called legitimate stage, the condition is not very different. It is sometimes affirmed that the theatre can be a distinctly uplifting influence. Very rarely has it ever been that, and certainly it is not that now. There was a time when women never appeared on the stage. As in Chinese theatres now, in England before the Restoration, female parts were taken by boys or men. And the first time a woman acted in Shakespeare's "Othello" it was regarded as being most shocking and monstrous. Though even before that time, the historian, Philip Schaff, declares that, "The theatre became more and more the nursery of vice, and deserved to be abhorred by all men of decent feeling and refined taste."

It may have been suggested that the presence of women in the play would purify the stage. But, the great actor Macready left it on record that from the time the theatres in England were opened for women to act they became actual seminaries of vice. And as was said by Rev. J. W. Kemp: "Nothing charmed the depraved audience so much as to hear lines grossly indecent repeated by a beautiful girl supposed not yet to have lost her innocence."

A Testimony.

A successful theatre manager recently said that "The chief themes of the theatre now, and ever have been, the passions of men—ambition and jealousy, leading to murder; anger to madness, and lust, to adultery and death." Even

contrast the theatre now with what it was, say, thirty years ago, and it surely must be confessed, that in regard to this phase of is pleasure, the world is not in any sense getting better. But in regard to all this, the condition is just precisely as the Lord said it would be. The pleasures that men love are carnal, and these they love more than God and God's goodness.

In the theatre, men lose respect for womanhood; around the theatre often crowd the Magdalenes of society. Why? Said an eminent American actor: "The theatre is moving down grade. When I want a night off I go down to the Bowery, in New York, and there I see people who used to come to see the Shakesperean plays ten or twelve years ago. They have gone steadily down."

Mr. J. R. Towse, a very able and scholarly dramatic critic in New York, who has just retired after fifty-seven years of continual and successful work, recently declared that he "finds the stage at its lowest estate in more than a century." It was this writer's life work to describe what has been going on at the theatre, and he says that, hitherto, he has always regarded the theatre as one of civilisation's greatest educational forces. "That" he says, "is why I denounce the present condition of the stage, destitute of morality as it is."

A noted English writer, in a book just published, says: "We have had in London during the last few years a series of nauseating plays which consisted of little else than the display of daring dresses, the drinking of cocktails, the smoking of cigarettes and some convulsive conversation, sprinkled with devilish double entendre. A play has been running in London recently of which Mr. St. John Ervine, the famous dramatic critic, says that, 'when it is not silly it is disgusting.' Describing the leading actress in this successful play he says: 'Twice she undresses—she stripped with some thoroughness in the first act; she stripped again, but not so thoroughly, in the second act.' Summing up the play Mr. St. John Ervine says: 'I consider it symptomatic of a dull foulness that has become too common in the theatre —it offers an ideal of life to young and febrile imagination which is mean and contemptible.'

"Not long ago there was a play in London in which we witnessed the pleasing spectacle of two young girls drinking

themselves into a condition of vulgar and sodden intoxication. The play was enormously popular, and had a long run.

"Three or four years ago I saw a foul and disgusting play in New York, and I told my American friends that I was perfectly certain it could never be produced on an English stage. But it was produced in London and had a long and successful run. Respectable English actors and actresses played in it, and for many months the best people crowded to see it. They received it with rapturous applause, considered it terribly funny, and, like our own censor, saw no harm in it."

The same writer mentions how Mr. Hubert Griffith, the dramatic critic of the London "Evening Standard," writing about a play produced a few months ago, said: "I thought up to last night that I was unshockable, but found that I wasn't." And outside the theatre where that play was produced I saw boards announcing "House full." While "Truth" says of the people in a recent play that they "pose and strut, mouthing their vapid and borrowed epigrams and generally behaving like the scum of a third-rate night club."

Why have I quoted from these men of the world? Simply because they know the theatre through and through. No one can accuse such men of being at all prejudiced against the theatre through religious conviction. They are probably men who love pleasures more than they love God. Neither do they stop away because of the foulness of many of the plays. Yet, we see that even men of this class are greatly shocked by the coarse, wicked vulgarity of many of these plays. And we cannot forget that the majority of people visit the theatres, more now than ever before. In this connection there is surely nothing more significant than the fact that in many of our cities, when the local newspapers are reporting Society doings in connection with the theatre, among the attendants there are often given the names of different Protestant ministers. Says "Quo-usque," my writer, and he is acquainted with many London ministers of religion: "To-day I do not know one clergyman or minister who is not an occasional theatre-goer. In two nights last summer one London play was seen by the Archbishop of

Canterbury and two bishops." And then he mentions the names of a number of well-known preachers who regularly patronise the theatre.

Yet this writer says: "Perhaps the most sinister fact about the English stage to-day, is not the existence of vulgar, sordid, unclean plays, but the fact that there are so many people who like them and make them pay. And—one almost shudders to say it—gross and obscene plays are chiefly patronised by women, who are apparently virtuous and respectable."

So that from these men of the world we learn that the drift of the theatre is distinctly downwards more than ever before. When I was preaching in New York, I noticed that even in that city several of the plays then being produced were so particularly foul that the police had to step into the crowded theatres and stop the plays. Then, if the stage is the mirror of life, as it has been claimed to be, all this shows that before God, and in the light of the eternal, the world is not getting better, but rapidly worse, as the Prophetic Scripture distinctly says would be when Jesus Christ is soon to come.

The Dance.

Here is another aspect of the world's pleasure, in regard to which it is easy to see that the whole tendency is down from God. A history of the modern dance might easily be compiled which would show the fearful and most rapid vitiation of the universal moral consciousness that has come because of it. There was first the introduction of the waltz from immoral houses of Continental cities, in which man and woman held each other tight in exciting embrace, to the accompaniment of seductive music. At first, respectable society resisted the encroaching of this indecency, but the sense of modesty was ultimately overcome, until the waltz became the regular attraction of reputable ballrooms. But, the waltz is the essence of respectability, compared with more recent corrupt and immoral importations into the dance-room. Here fair young girls, but scantily clad, in unrestrained liberty, swing around in the arms of men, bad and good alike, while liberties are taken under the spell of sensuous music that would have terribly shocked the people

of an earlier generation, as the same thing now does in the case of the women of Heathen lands, when first this kind of thing is by them seen.

That is why the track through the modern dance room is so strewn with wrecks of character and innumerable broken lives.

Says Gail Hamilton: "The very pose of the parties in the dance suggests impurity."

A leading teacher of dancing said, "Dancing to-day is the most degrading thing on earth; it is demoralising our young people."

A one-time president of a Dancing Masters' Association in a great city gives it as his deliberate opinion that "two-thirds of the girls who are ruined fall through the influence of the dance." While the matron of a home for fallen women in Los Angeles declares that "seven-tenths of the women who go there have fallen through the dance and its influence." Testimony of like character might be gathered anywhere. But enough now has been said to show in this special form of its pleasure, as in regard to everything else, the world is not getting better, but rapidly worse.

The same downward tendency is now in everything.

One writer says: "The morality of English Society has been dangerously lowered and poisoned by an increasing number of frenzied and hectic novels dealing with adultery, moral revolt and sex upheaval. The peril of many of these novels is not that they deal with sin—but that they are saturated with sex, and they treat sin as if it did not matter and led to no serious or painful consequences."

Recently a distinguished American Judge advocated companionate marriages without children, to satisfy youth until sufficient money had been accumulated to choose a life partner and establish a permanent home. That is, that young people should live together in adultery, using distinct means to prevent family responsibility.

In regard to sex relationship the revolt, as to Divine law in the matter, is now universal. Family limitation is generally accepted, and the fall in the birth rate is appalling. If the birth rate of fifty years ago prevailed in Europe now, there would be two and a half million more babies born in the year. The British birth rate is now almost the lowest in the world. In 1920, 957,000 babies were

born in England and Wales. In 1926, with a larger number of parents of suitable age, only 694,000 were born. The drop in six years was 263,000, more than 27 per cent. What does this new condition in the world's life mean? The defiance of God, the murder of souls!

A while ago, if a person were divorced, he would have to keep low. Now, nothing is thought of such a transaction. A woman, or a man, may have been divorced over and over again, but the door into Society is never now closed against such. And as one has said, a man may be known to live an absolutely immoral life, yet the community thinks none the worse of him. For adultery is no longer looked upon as a sin in the social world.

A Los Angeles paper, speaking of adultery, said of it, "that it was what Society considers a personal sin." Then it went on to say: "This personal sin is committed wholesale, every hour of the day, without clamor of outraged feeling." Yes, no matter what the Modernist preacher may say, "As it was in the days of Sodom, so is it now. As it was in the days before the Flood, when God, looking down from Heaven, saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, precisely like that is it now.

In America there is one divorce to every six marriages. The published evidence in regard to such is often of the most sordid character. So revolting was it in one case that one of the newspapers refused to print it, and said: "In this divorce case some of the publications reporting it have gone so far beyond the line of decency as to seem insane. Unless the minds of the children of New York are to be drenched in obscenity, it seems to us that censorship of the press must come."

That is it. The reporter gives what he hears in Court. It is a drenching in obscenity.

It is therefore an exposure of modern Sodom. It shows that the moral condition of masses of the people in Christendom is as the Lord Jesus Christ 1900 years ago said, now it would be. Prohibit the publication of details, and up goes the number of divorces by 100 per cent., as has recently happened in England.

Yes, it may be better that all such things should be covered over and smothered out of sight, but, O, my fellow men and women, God is still looking down from His Heaven

at the great wickedness of men and women throughout the earth. He still sees it "that every imagination of the thoughts of the human heart is only evil continually."

It was in the early days, that "the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair." Now it is the same. "The women of New York are driving me to Hell," said a new arrival there recently.

Modesty was once the chief attribute of womanhood. It is certainly not much that way now. Low necks, bare arms, short skirts, scarce to the knees, the use of powder, rouge, the lipstick, bobbed heads, go far to stimulate lust and carnal passion. Years ago, it was only fallen women usually that did that kind of thing. Now such practices are well-nigh general.

In the light of all such things, then, can it now be truthfully said, that in this connection the world is approximating nearer to God?

Crime.

Shocking crime is increasing everywhere by leaps and bounds. The account of awful murders, fearful immoralities, suicides, anarchies and other sad tragedies are all in the daily story of the world's life as given in the newspaper. Said an American Judge recently: "The condition of lawlessness in the United States is unparalleled in the history of civilisation." Twelve thousand murders in one year That is said to be the annual murder tally for this great country, that once was spoken about as being the most lawful country in the world. In America 100,000 murderers are at large unpunished.

But it is now like that everywhere. It is the Sign of the Times! The Son of God said that so it would be. His words were that, "Iniquity shall abound." As in the days of Noah. As in the case of Sodom. So shall it be when the Son of man comes. It was also clearly affirmed that "wicked men and seducers shall wax worse."

Thinking men are fearing the next great war. They assure us that it will mean the destruction of civilisation, the suicide of the race.

There is something that should more be feared. It is the judgment of Almighty God. Unbelieving men and women everywhere are actually walking on the very thin

crust of a terrific volcano. The tragedy may happen any moment. Do you remember the Titanic disaster? Out on the ocean, the night is clear and calm, a mighty ship, the largest that had ever been launched, is on her maiden voyage across the Atlantic. She is a mighty floating palace, filled with the most luxurious appointments to satisfy the lusts of the flesh and the eye. Many modern-day inventions are united to make her unsinkable. Who imagines the nearness of the danger? The Sabbath Day has been spent mainly in amusements. The eve has passed in the music of the dance. It is now almost midnight, and the last card party is about to separate. Suddenly a crash, and quickly the mighty Titanic sinks to the bottom of the ocean, taking with her about sixteen hundred souls out into the Awful Presence of their Creator.

The Coming again of the Son of God is surely at hand. The warning cry is everywhere being upraised. Are you ready? The door into life may soon be closed against you. It is still open wide. "O, enter, enter, now!"

CHAPTER VI.

The Sign of The Great Awakening.

"The wise shall understand." (Dan. 12-10.)

According to God's Word, as the Gospel Age draws to its close, there is to be a great awakening in regard to the question of the return of God's Son to this world. The text here given shows it. Many similar Scriptures do the same thing. These, we shall consider as we go along. Now we begin with this twelfth chapter of the book of Daniel, in which it is so clearly intimated that in the time of the end, the wise are to understand what could not before be understood. And what we shall see is, that what the wise are to understand, in the Time of the End, are the things that relate to the Coming again of the Lord Jesus Christ from Heaven. Whatever may have been at any previous time, in the time of the end, the wise shall understand. For, indeed, everything mentioned in this chapter twelve distinctly relates only to the glorious event that seems now at hand.

A Strange Happening in the Unseen World.

"And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people." (Dan., 12-1.)

The time of this significant happening is clearly indicated. It is to be, "at that time." That is, not just at any time, nor is it all the time, but, "at THAT time." "That time" is called the "Time of the End" in the following places: Dan., 8, 17-19; 9, 26; 11, 35, 40, 45; and in 12, 4, 6, 9. Now, if these references are carefully examined, they will be always found to relate to the end of the Times of the

Gentiles, to the end of the scattering of Israel, to the culmination of the world's sin and to the Great Tribulation, which follows the rapture of all true believers to the heavens, and which also immediately precedes the appearing of Christ in glory.

"At that time shall Michael stand up." Who then is Michael? We are plainly told. He is the great prince which standeth for the children of Daniel's people. And Daniel's people are the Jews, for it was a Jew that Daniel was. So, then, the Jews are represented somewhere by a great prince. His name is Michael. Where is it he thus represents the Jews? This can only be in the unseen world, and in the very Presence of God. And it is at that time, before God, that Michael is then to stand up.

We may never fully understand everything here, in regard to the order of things that maintains away out in the invisible universe. Though, it would seem that the principle of law operates as definitely there as here. And there would also seem to be, there, those who are higher in the angelic order than are others. There is a mention made of Michael on four occasions in God's Word. In Daniel 10, when the prophet had been praying, the heavenly messenger from the eternal throne tells of having been delayed in fulfilling the Divine Will, through the resistance of one he called the Prince of Persia. The angel said that it was Michael, one of the chief princes, who then came to his help.

In Jude, we are told that it was Michael, who contended for the body of Moses. And Moses also was of the same people as Daniel. And in Revelation twelve, where it is related how Satan, in the Great Tribulation, is to persecute the remnant of Israel, it also mentions how that, at that time, there is to be a war in Heaven, when Michael and his angels are to fight against the dragon and his angels. In this connection, therefore, it is illuminating to be told, in Daniel 12, that Michael before the Throne of Eternal Power, stands there for the children of Daniel's race. That is, he is the representative of the Jewish people in the unseen world. It is somewhat like what our Lord said in Matthew 18, in regard to the little ones: "I say unto you, that in Heaven their angels do always behold the face of My Father which is in Heaven."

A Strange Circumstance.

Some of these things may not now seem easy for our understanding. It is not perhaps in the Divine purpose that they should so be. Now we see through a glass darkly. Though the time is surely soon coming when we shall see face to face. Now we know in part, then shall we fully know. In the meanwhile, it is our blessed privilege to gratefully receive whatever information, God in His Word is pleased to give us, concerning the invisible world.

And, in regard to what we are here told, the truly strange thing about it, is that, while we here are told that Michael standeth for the Children of Daniel's people, it is not really until the definite time indicated he actually begins to stand. Yet even this may not be so difficult a matter, when we remember that, during this Gospel Age, there is only One in the Divine Presence, through Whom men of any nation may now approach unto God—our Saviour Jesus Christ. He is our Great High Priest, Who ever liveth to make intercession for us. When the Jews had finally rejected Him, He then told them, that no man could now approach the Father but by Him. And it only has been through Him, during the last nineteen hundred years, that men of any race have been enabled to draw near to God.

Recollection here, in regard to the threefold office of our Blessed Lord, may be of help to us in understanding what is now before us. It was long foretold that Jesus Christ would appear as Prophet, Priest and King. But, He was not to be all three at the same time. Moses had prophesied how the Lord God would raise up a Prophet unto the people like unto Moses himself. (Deut., 18-15.) Over and over again did the Jews say, when they beheld the ministry of the Lord, "This is of a truth that Prophet that should come into the world." Yes, it was as that Prophet, our Lord was in the world, when He came the first time. But, when His ministry here was finished by His sacrificial death, His prophetic office ceased and He then entered upon His office in Heaven as Priest. "For, we are told, Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figure of the true; but into Heaven itself, now to appear in the Presence of God for us." (Heb., 9-24.) Also, it is said, that "We have a Great High Priest, that is passed into the Heavens." (Heb., 4-14.)

So that our Lord is now, for us, fulfilling His office as Priest. Approach to God is now only possible through Him. But this is not to be for ever. A time is coming when His ministry as Priest will have come to an end. When is that to be? Surely, when His Church is complete and every member of it has been caught away into the Divine Presence. He will then have left His place before the eternal Throne, and will have come through the opened heavens to receive unto Himself the whole company of the redeemed. "For the Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven; with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: so shall we ever be with the Lord." (1 Thes., 4-16.)

It is quite evident, therefore, that then, believers will no longer need Christ before the Throne as their High Priest, for the Word here given plainly shows that from then on, they are forever to be in the immediate Presence of their Lord. It would therefore seem that, at that time, He lays aside His priestly office as, nineteen hundred years ago, He laid aside the Prophetic office, having then fulfilled it. But this He will do, in order that He may go on to assume His office as King. For it is then He receives the Kingdom, and the kingdoms of this world at that same time become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ. And then it is, that He emerges through the opened heavens as King of kings and Lord of lords.

Michael Stands Up.

It thus seems to be, that it is at the time when our Blessed Lord lays aside His office as High Priest to descend out of Heaven for the Church, His Bride, that Michael then stands up, before the Eternal Throne, to represent God's earthly, covenant people, the Jews. Everything, then to happen, only confirms all that is here said. For now we go on to read that how,

"At that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and at that time there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that

time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book."

The time of trouble, here mentioned, is precisely the same Great Tribulation as was mentioned by the Lord, in Matthew, 24-21. This awful time does not really begin until the rapture of God's true people from the earth. And verse 29, in the same chapter, shows that it is immediately after the Tribulation of those days that the Son of man is to come in the clouds of Heaven with power and great glory. And God is here telling Daniel that, it is at that time his people, the Jews, will be delivered. For it is then, they are to see their Redeemer, Whom they pierced, and will all come to say: "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." This they refused to do nineteen hundred years ago. The Lord then told them that it was not until they said that, they would see Him. It is in the book of Revelation that the circumstances of the Great Tribulation are unfolded in clearest detail. While verse seven, in the first chapter, announces what is then to happen. There we read, "Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, AND THEY ALSO WHICH PIERCED HIM," that is the Jews, "And all kindred of the earth shall wail because of Him. Even so, Amen."

A Partial Resurrection.

The next verse, in Daniel twelve, goes on to show that, at the time when Michael stands up, there is to be a resurrection of some of them that sleep in the dust of the earth, and those who then awake will be unto everlasting life. But the others will be to shame and everlasting contempt. That is the same as we are told in the New Testament. For it is not one universal resurrection that is going then to be. There is to be a resurrection of the just. There is also to be a resurrection of the unjust. When Christ comes for His Church, it is only the dead in Christ that then are raised. The rest of the dead live not till the thousand years, of Revelation twenty, are finished.

Then the fourth verse shows how definite understanding, in regard to all these things, was to be restrained right on, until the time of the end. And in that time of the end, it is said, that "many shall run to and fro and knowledge shall be increased." A plain revelation it is that when all

the purposes of God, now under consideration, are about to consummate, there will be much rapidity and terrific acceleration in regard to travel and also an unprecedented increase of knowledge on the earth. This we shall later see is another of the Divinely given signs of the Time of the End. Verse seven also explains that, all of these things have to do with the national restoration of Daniel's people; for a nation again the Jews are surely going to be, with Jesus Christ as their King.

It was then, that Daniel confessed his failure to discern what God was making known through him. He said:

"I heard, but I understood not: then said I, O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things?

"And He said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end. Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; BUT THE WISE SHALL UNDERSTAND."

Well, then, what is the sum of all of the wonderful things thus made known in this twelfth chapter of the book of Daniel? It surely is, that, in the time of the end, God's dear people are to be sorely tried, but, through their trial, they will be purified and made white. But the wicked are to do wickedly This is the same thing precisely as we are taught throughout the New Testament, in regard to general world conditions as the day of our Lord's return draws near.

None of the wicked shall understand. They will not! They cannot. That is, they will never understand. The meaning of the strange things that will then be crowding into the world's life will have no message for them.

But, the wise shall understand! What? Well, just this one glorious thing. That the coming of their blessed Lord is then right near at hand.

Can it mean anything else, but just that?

Who then are the wise? It is only God's Word that can tell us that. For the world's estimate in regard to all such matters is entirely different to that of Heaven. By the Lord Himself, those who hear and also do His sayings are likened unto a WISE man, which built his house upon a rock: so that when the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, it fell not: because it was founded upon a Rock.

So that the wise are only those who accept and do the literal words of Jesus Christ. The Modernist unbelievers, and all others who refuse to believe our Lord's words, regarding His coming again to this world, are not building upon that Rock. For eternity, they are simply building upon the subject matter of their own imaginations. They deny the Lord and refuse His instruction. They cannot understand!

But God said it. The wise who are building upon the words of Christ, do understand. They firmly believe everything their Lord has made known in regard to His coming again. They accept what is written.

Then, also, in the Parable of the wise and the foolish virgins, we are told that the wise are those who not only take up lamps of profession, as believers, but who also take oil in the vessels thereof, while the foolish virgins are those who are satisfied to have lamps, without troubling to know if there is any oil in them.

We shall later see how that, in the Scriptures, oil invariably represents the Holy Spirit, whose regenerating power is inevitably necesssary in regard to all true salvation. Therefore the wise are born again Christians; the foolish are not. The religion of the latter class will never take them into the Presence of the Redeemer Lord. They cannot understand, because they deny the plain teaching of the Spirit of God. But the wise do, for the Spirit leads them into all truth.

Again, it is said, that he that winneth souls is wise. For they that turn many to righteousness are to shine, in the eternal world, as the stars for ever. Thus the soul-winner shall understand that the highest possible wisdom for them will be to lead others into God's salvation. And they who are now believing in the possible near return of their Lord from Heaven, also are convinced that their main business is to get the people ready for the wonderful event. Their faith in regard to the doctrine of the Second Advent is evidenced by their zeal and fervor in regard to the salvation of the lost.

So, now, we go on to see that the present mighty awakening of interest, in regard to our Lord's return among God's own people, is the same thing as God told Daniel was to be in the Time of the End. All over the earth, God's people, who receive the wisdom that is from above, are surely

coming into the understanding of the great event that is soon to break. And this only is

As It Should Be.

It was precisely like that at the time of the first coming of Christ into this world. The Jewish nation was not ready to receive Him. So, it is said, He came unto His own, but His own received Him not. But there were some of them who did. To all such was then given authority to become the sons of God. And these, then, like every true believer now, "were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

It was at a time when gross darkness covered the earth, and fearful apostasy prevailed all over the land. Though there were still a few earnest, believing souls, who accepted the literal words, which God had inspired holy men to write. They had believed, and were waiting for the Consolation of Israel—the sure Coming of God's Christ.

For instance, there was the aged Simeon. Just and devout was he. And long had he waited, we are told, for the coming of Him Who was to be the Consolation of Israel. See then what is written: "It was revealed unto Him, by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ." This surely means, that there had come into the soul of this devout believing man, the solemn conviction, that he would be here, on this earth, when Christ would come. So that, amid the general apostasy, the aged saint was in such intimate touch with the eternal, that when the Holy Babe was brought into the Temple, he knew. For the first time, rang out the Nunc Dimittis, "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy Word: for mine eyes have seen Thy Salvation, which Thou hast prepared before all people; a Light to lighten the Gentiles and the Glory of Thy people Israel."

There was just this difference between Simeon then, and the true people of God now. To him the Word of God had come, that after He had seen, with his own eyes, God's Christ, he was to die. But, to those who are to be here until the Lord comes, the same Word of the Lord declares, that they are not to die. They are to be changed and caught away to be forever with their Lord.

Anna.

Then, there was this devout widow, another aged servant of God. "She coming in at that instant, gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of Him to all them that looked for Redemption in Israel."

Do you see that? There were others, besides these two, in Jerusalem, who were then looking for the Coming of the Redeemer. They may not have been as far into the understanding of God's purposes as were Simeon and Anna, but they were ready to receive the wonderful knowledge through them. They were surely of that company, spoken about in Malachi, as who feared the Lord and spake often one to another.

The Priests and the Pharisees were not then able to help such humble souls as were then looking for Redemption in Israel. Nor could they understand, what was then so plain to the watching ones. We should thank God for the Simeons and the Annas who now are encouraging others around them to expect soon the Coming again of God's Blessed Son from Heaven, according as is revealed in the Divine Word. As was on the occasion of the first Advent, not many of high authority in the Christian Church seem to have much interest in regard to the Second Advent. But, the awakening has come. The wise are coming into the understanding of the wonderful knowledge. Like it was, when our Lord came the first time into this world, so is it now. There were such as Simeon and Anna. There were those like Joseph of Arimathea, the honorable counsellor, about whom it is also written, "Which also waited for the Kingdom of God." All of these had distinct premonition, then, in regard to the near coming of God's Christ.

Josephus quotes the Roman writers, Tacitus and Suetonis, to the effect, that at the time of our Lord's first coming, there prevailed throughout the entire East an intense conviction, derived from ancient prophecies, that ere long a powerful monarch would arise in Judea, and ultimately gain dominion over the world. And, in both Jewish and Pagan writings, there is distinct proof that then a guilty and weary world was dimly expecting the advent of its Deliverer. So that, it is only in the light of some such spirit of general expectancy can be understood what hap-

pened in regard to the coming of the wise men from the East, and their strange question, which shook greatly the whole of Jerusalem, "Where is He that is born King of the Jews?"

There is indeed a peculiar significance in regard to the wise men's question. It was not, "Where is He born, that is going to be King of the Jews?" It was, "Where is He, born King of the Jews?" The point is, that Christ was not born to be a king. He was born King. The only one in all the House of Israel thus to be born King. Others had been born heirs of a kingship. The present King of Spain was born after his father's decease, and was therefore born a king. Joseph was still living when our Saviour was born, but Joseph could not occupy the throne. But Jesus was born King; the throne of David was His, by every Divine and earthly right.

The wise men saw His star, believed the knowledge that had come to them, and thus came to be among those who were ready to receive Christ at His first Advent. Their wisdom was, that they believed the King was coming. And it is in the Time of the End that, like those at His first Advent, the wise are to understand. So that, just as it was, 1900 years ago, so is it to be, when Christ shall come again. Those we have mentioned were ready to receive the Lord, because some Holy Ghost conviction had come to them. They had understanding that the Divine Prophecy regarding the Coming of Christ was near its fulfilment. The general spirit of expectancy confirmed the God-given conviction that was theirs. They waited for the event.

Just as it was with them, so is it now. The conviction is everywhere again among all God's dear people. There is also a definite spirit of expectation. But, it is only the wise who understand the meaning thereof. So it should now be. It is this, God said would be in the Time of the End.

The Midnight Cry.

That there was to be a widespread awakening in regard to the fact of the Coming again of Jesus Christ to this world is just as distinctly evident from our Lord's own teaching. There is the Parable of the Wise and the Foolish Virgins, already mentioned. We here remember the circumstances under which the Parable was given. The Master was going

away. The disciples, like Daniel, desired to know how everything was to end. The Lord had just spoken to them regarding the destruction of the Temple. It was a threefold question they then presented. "Tell us," said they, "when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of Thy Coming? and of the End of the Age?"

The whole of Matthew 24 was Christ's answer. Chapter 25 is clearly the Divine application, and the Divinely revealed consummation, in regard to the Time of the End about which the disciples desired to know. The Parable of the Wise and the Foolish Virgins is the Lord's unfolding, regarding the whole history of Christendom, and the Coming again of Christ. In its every detail such only would clearly seem to be the case. See how the Parable begins:

"Then shall the Kingdom of Heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the Bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish."

We should note carefully what is said the virgins did. "They took their lamps, AND WENT FORTH TO MEET THE BRIDEGROOM."

That means, the Bridegroom was coming. They took lamps and went forth to meet Him. And there is distinct harmony in all this with what the Lord, later, promised His disciples, when He said to them, "In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

That was simply the Bridegroom going away to prepare a home for His bride, and His coming again to receive her unto Himself. And, the Lord, in the Parable said, that Christians were those who took their lamps, and went forth to meet the Bridegroom. That is, in early Christendom, the confession of Christ, was the going forth to meet Him, Who had said that He would come again. And the word Paul spoke, to the Thessalonian Christians, is clearly just to the same effect: "Ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; and to WAIT for His Son from Heaven, even Jesus which delivered us from the wrath to come."

Language could not be plainer. The true Christian attitude is here declared to be one of "Looking for that blessed Hope and the appearing in glory of the Great God, our Saviour Jesus Christ."

The whole early Church believed fervently in the Coming again of the Lord Jesus Christ from Heaven. No intelligent persons have ever doubted it. Every believer was then waiting for the Lord from Heaven. But, in the Parable of the Virgins, the Lord clearly taught that this looking for the return of the Heavenly Bridegroom would go right out of the experience of the whole of Christendom. It was distinctly that, He said:

"While the Bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept."

Nothing can be clearer. Because the Bridegroom did not come as soon as was expected, they all fell asleep. That is, they became oblivious to the solemn fact, that their Lord was still to come, and that they had presumably gone out to meet Him. When people fall asleep, they go into a condition of forgetfulness. Hopes and fears alike go from them. So that only one thing, in this connection, does the Parable teach. In regard to the Coming again of the Lord from Heaven, the whole of Christendom was to lose its message. "They all slumbered and slept."

The Awakening.

That, the Lord here said, would be. There can be no mistake in regard to this. "There was a cry made." And when was it the cry was made? At midnight, when they were all slumbering and sleeping. What does midnight mean? Darkness, black darkness. What does darkness represent in the Scriptures? Sin, ignorance, sorrow, despair. So then, at a time of deepest sorrow and ignorance of God, there is a cry made. What is the cry? Listen, now: "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet Him." Strange thing, is it not, that such a cry should be made at midnight? Why should the cry not be made at midday, and thus show us that the whole world would be won for God, and righteousness cover the whole earth, before the Lord was to come? This has been the teaching of some. But it is not true. It cannot be. For it is at midnight the cry is made.

What then is the cry that at midnight is then to be raised? It is just this: "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet Him!" That is, the Lord is coming, get ready for the marriage. Watch for Him, as the time is right at hand. In the Time of the End the wise shall understand.

But who is it, that raises so disturbing a Midnight Cry? Well, whoever would be likely to raise it? It would only be those, who in the midnight hour, believe all that God has caused to be written. These are the wise, who, according to Daniel, in the time of the end, will have understanding regarding what is soon to happen. They are truly like that prophet himself. Daniel gives testimony, that it was from the prayerful study of all that was written, he first understood that the time for the Lord to again intervene on the behalf of His people was just then at hand. It was this Daniel wrote in regard to the first year of Darius: "I, Daniel, understood by books the number of the years, whereof the Word of the Lord came unto Jeremiah, the prophet, that He would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem."

Well, surely the Midnight Cry has now been raised by some of the most godly souls this world has ever known. They are generally devout believers of the Divine Scriptures who now understand that the coming of their Lord is near at hand. Through the ministry of such the Midnight Cry is reaching out all over the earth, and the wise everywhere are going out to meet the Bridegroom. Because they believe it, men and women are turning right away from evil living to wait for the Son from Heaven. For always is it true, that "He that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, as He is pure." When the Bridegroom comes, being ready, with lamps all burning bright, they will go in with their Lord to the marriage, and to everlasting blessedness. But, the foolish will not go into the marriage, for them, the Lord knoweth not. They do not belong to the Lord at all. If they did, the Lord would know them, all right. For is it not written: "The Lord knoweth all them that are His." "In the Time of the End the wise shall understand."

All Scripture is the Same.

In regard to the Coming again of Jesus Christ, there is always the same indication given. In the Time of the End the wise shall understand. Whatever else is it that is suggested, in the Lord's own instruction, over and over again? For example, take the words in Matthew 24:

"Now learn a parable of the fig tree. When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: so likewise ye, when ye shall SEE all these things, KNOW that He is near, even at the doors."

Now, what is this? The Lord's people are to see certain things. And when they SEE these things, they are to KNOW. What? That their Lord is near, even at the doors.

Now, is that not the same thing as the Lord said to Daniel? "In the Time of the End the wise shall understand.

It was the same thing, the Lord spoke, as recorded in the Gospel of Luke: "And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh."

Things are coming to pass. At the beginning of them, the Lord's people are to lift up their heads, and look up. Why? Because they will KNOW, that then their deliverance is near. Why look up? Because it is from above, their Lord is to come. The Lord Himself is to descend from Heaven.

After Christ had gone up through the Heavens, the two men in white said: "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into Heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into Heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go up into Heaven."

The men of Galilee were not to look up. But, when certain things would begin to happen, the Lord said, that His people were then to look up. There was a reason for that. There will then be special need for it. God showed Daniel, that the Time of the End is to be a time of sore trial for earnest people. "Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried."

Whatever could be plainer? The days before the Coming again of God's Son, from Heaven, are to be days of purifying affliction for the people of God. But, the wise will understand. In the beginning of these things, they will know that their deliverance is right at hand. They

are to look up. Because they are then to know that their Lord is soon to come from Heaven. That is all. There is nothing else more clearly made known in the Bible. In the Time of the End, the wise shall understand.

The Apostles taught only the same thing. Paul said: "Ye are not in darkness (i.e., ignorance), brethren, that that day should overtake you as a thief." And Peter affirmed it also: "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, in your hearts, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn and the day star arise."

All of these things surely mean, just what the Lord told Daniel. That is, that, "In the Time of the End the wise shall understand." So that, just when the Coming again of Christ is right near at hand, in the experience of God's dear people, there will have arisen the solemn conviction, that the great event is not then far away. It is for them specially, is given the oft-repeated exhortation to watch. Indeed, it is only reasonable to believe, that the many Scriptures bearing directly on conditions relating to the End time, are intended, particularly for Christian people on this earth, just as the great event is about to break. Some Modernists have gone so far, as to say, that it was the Apostle Paul's enthusiasm in regard to this doctrine, that led the early Christians into such error, that they actually expected Christ to come again in their day. What folly is here! Either Paul was inspired of God to write as he did, or else he was not. If inspired of God, then the mistake was not his. The very suggestion of such a thing is deplorable. It is to charge the Almighty with folly.

The inspired writings were given for the whole Church. They belong as much to believers, here when the Lord is near to return, as they did to believers in Apostolic times. But, the hundreds of Scriptures that refer to the Lord's Second Advent must have a greater significance for believers on the earth, now, than ever they did for those of any preceding generation. The mention of just one or two references should be sufficient to prove what is here said. "When ye shall SEE all these things, KNOW that He is near." "When ye SEE these things come to pass, KNOW ye that the Kingdom of God is nigh at hand." "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is;

but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye SEE the day approaching." (Heb. 10-25). These Scriptures, and others like them, have only one implication. Those to whom they are given are to see things by which they will know the coming of the Lord to be then near. It is, therefore, fully apparent, that the complete significance in regard to all these things is peculiarly for Christian people on the earth, at the time when they actually are happening, rather than for any others before.

The seeing, and the consequent knowledge, in regard to what is soon to happen, is the same as the awakening of the slumbering virgins, in the parable. At midnight there was a cry made, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet Him. Then all these virgins arose and trimmed their lamps."

It is the same, also, as the Lord told Daniel: "The wise shall understand." When? In the Time of the End!

A Past Awakening.

There is no doubt whatever, in the time of what is known in Church history as the Dark Ages, all understanding in regard to the Lord's return seemed to have gone out of Christian consciousness. And when the hope of the Lord's return had gone out of Christian experience, then also had become lost many other vital things as well. Not even to-day does the Roman Catholic Church have any understanding in regard to the Blessed Hope. Not being encouraged to read the Scriptures for themselves, the people, who are under the tyranny of Romanism, cannot know anything of the wonderful thing that is coming. Though, at the close of the tenth century, there was a distinct awakening in regard to this Truth, and multitudes, because it was then the close of the cycle of a thousand years, thought the end was then near at hand. There are preachers now, who refer to that movement, only to disparage the present widespread awakening, as to the possible near coming of the Lord. But that former movement was based almost on entire ignorance. True was it, that then, as now, there were wars, famines, pestilences, physical upheavals, and also widespread confusion. Preachers were certainly proclaiming the great event to be near at hand. Industry was everywhere suspended. The Emperor of Ger-

many announced a Truce of God and went about in a garb of penitence preaching the Coming of Christ. On the last day of the year the people clothed themselves in ascension robes, and at sunset betook themselves to the roofs of the houses, the porches of cathedrals, and the open fields, where they stood expectant. The hours passed until midnight. Midnight passed; the stars began to fade. The first gleam of morning came, and the Christian world, heaving a sigh of relief as of one coming out of a paralysis of mingled fear and hope, went back to its work. Such was the end of a movement which was based only upon ignorance and fear. Whatever may have caused such a climax, it was certainly not love for the appearing of the Lord that provoked such strange action. It was the dread of judgment.

But fear is not the constraining power in the present attitude of expectancy in the Church. It is love for the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ. If He does not come soon, not relief, but disappointment, will fill the hearts of the waiting ones. Though, we would yield humbly to the Divine Will and would still wait, with patience, the coming of the Lord.

That tenth century awakening was without understanding of the wonderful things God had made known in His Word, concerning the Second Advent. The Bible was not then available to the people. They could not know that, then, there was no budding Fig Tree. There was not, at that time, the least sign of the return to the Covenant Land of the scattered people of Israel. Nor was there happening any of the wonderful things, regarding the nations, that God showed Daniel would give understanding to the wise, of the End being at hand.

The Reformation.

At the time of the Reformation, and after, the Midnight Cry seemed to sound forth. Great Reformers, like Luther, Baxter, Wesley, and other great Evangelical leaders, began to see that Christ was to come again. They taught the certainty of the wonderful event, though the teaching was not very generally received.

Then, at the close of the 17th century, Dr. Whitby promulgated his theory that the Lord was not to come again until at the close of the Millennium. This unscriptural

theory soon took hold, and came to be the settled doctrine of many of the Protestant Churches. Because of this, many of the Churches became largely political in their aspiration. Social reform, and the equalising of human conditions, took the place of the Gospel of a new birth through faith in Christ. The city of God was to be brought down from Heaven by human effort. This world was to be improved and the Millennium brought in, through a new social Gospel. The chief mission of the Church came to be the alleviation of human ills, and so far as the Hope of the Lord's Return is concerned, Protestantism largely went right off to sleep.

The Last Day Awakening.

Early in the 19th century, there began another movement of an entirely different character. The attention of many of God's dear people came to centre around what the Bible teaches, in regard to the Second Coming of Christ. Then, in the forties, the Midnight Cry sounded forth. New movements and organisations sprang into being all round the earth, with just one distinctive message: "Behold the Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet Him." Certainly, mistakes were made. Some of those who came into the knowledge of the wonderful Divine Truth, developed eccentricities. Distressing error came to be associated with this teaching about the Coming again of Christ. But, who was to blame? The precious doctrine had no place in the ministry of the Church's official teachers. Those who received it, could point to hundreds of New Testament Scriptures, which plainly show that the Son of God is surely coming back again to this world. Yet, the doctrine was having no mention in the pulpit. The ministers shunned all reference to it. Those who receive the Divine Words, as they are written, came to be charged with fanaticism. No wonder that many sincere souls drifted right away from the Churches. That only is why error has come into the experience of many who are looking for the Coming again of Christ. It is now impossible to make a truly awakened soul, who has come to love the Bible, ever to think, that there is to be no Second Advent. The faith of all who are now looking for the Blessed Hope is based entirely on the Scriptures. They can give clear Bible reason for the faith that is in them. They know what is written. Indeed, this doctrine

has become the rallying point for the great majority of earnest and evangelical people, belonging to all the Churches. Not ever before has this great truth been more firmly held by Christian men and women. A great host of believers now receive it and stand for all that is written in God's Word. They know their Lord is Coming back again and that the great event is not now far away!

A Dividing Factor.

The Church is now rapidly dividing into two camps. In the one camp, are mostly those who refuse to believe the Son of God is ever coming again, and who now deny that the Bible is the inspired word of God. Such receive the evolutionary theory of Creation, and are rapidly coming to deny all the other great doctrines of evangelical Christianity. In the other camp, are those who hold the whole, the entire Bible, as the Word of God. Accepting the precious Book as being Divine and absolutely authoritative and final in all its expression, such believing souls are now everywhere looking for the soon coming again of their Blessed Lord from Heaven.

There has never been a greater, impelling force in regard to the saving of the lost, since the close of the Apostolic age, as is this awakening in regard to the doctrine of the Lord's return. Every great evangelist, from C. H. Spurgeon and D. L. Moody, down to Dr. Chapman and Billy Sunday, has each been inspired to mighty effort by the wonderful thought that soon the Lord is to come.

An Impelling Influence.

We can see how mighty has been the influence of this doctrine, from the sayings of many of God's much used servants. Mr. Moody said: "I look on this world as a wrecked vessel; this world is getting darker and darker; its ruin is coming nearer and nearer. Nowhere in the Scriptures is it claimed that the whole world shall be brought to the feet of Christ in this dispensation." And when asked the secret of the power and intensity of his preaching, the great evangelist replied: "I have preached for years with the thought that before every sermon is finished the Lord might come."

Dr. J. Wilbur Chapman wrote: "I preach the Return of Christ because—the thought of the Second Coming has

changed my whole ministry, giving me a passion for preaching, and a new conception of the Word of God—I firmly believe in the pre-millennial Advent of our Lord. Not long ago, I said to one of the most careful Bible students I have known, 'Is there any reason to suppose that our Lord may come soon?' He replied, 'So far as the fulfilment of Prophecy is concerned, there is no reason why He should not come speedily.' "

And this same great evangelist also wrote: "The times in which we live are exceedingly serious. Surely we are facing a world crisis of some sort. I would suggest that all Christian people give themselves more diligently to the study of prophecy. As for myself I have not the slightest doubt but that we are approaching the last days."

The late Earl of Shaftsbury, shortly before his passing away, said, "I think I can say that, for forty years, I have not lived one conscious hour that was not influenced by the 'Hope' of the Coming again of our Lord." There is surely here distinct evidence regarding what it was that influenced the life of this noble philanthropist.

We have also the testimony of Dr. G. Campbell Morgan, the distinguished Bible expositor. "To me the Second Coming is the perpetual light on the path which makes the present bearable. I never lay my head on the pillow without thinking that, maybe, before the morning breaks, the final Morning may have dawned! I never begin my work . . . without thinking that, perhaps, He may interrupt my work, and begin His own! This is now His Word to all believing souls, 'Till I come.' We are not looking for death, we are looking for Him! . . . If He should come . . . ere the day is done, will there be any we have won for Him? In the hour of the Advent, not the amount of this world's goods amassed . . . not the name we have won for ourselves . . . **but the souls won!** . . . The doctrine of the Advent does not produce a fever for statistics, it creates an inspiration for service!"

The testimony left by C. H. Spurgeon, regarding the vital value of this doctrine, in Christian experience, is just as definite as it can well be. "Look for Him. Begin to think of the Kingdom . . . O! be not earth bound . . . build not your nest on any of these trees, they are all marked for the axe; and are coming down; and your nest too, if you

build it there! Also there are some conditions of angry temper, of pride, petulance and sloth!

"It was believed in the early Church . . . that the 7000th year of man's history would be a Sabbath; that, as there were six days of toil, and the seventh a day of rest; so the Ages would have 6000 years of toil—and the seventh would be 1000 years of rest.

"In any case our business is to expect our Lord always. There is in Revelation 20 . . . a distinct promise that the saints shall reign . . . with Him on the earth.

"This doctrine is not unpractical . . . In the New Testament, whenever the Apostles want to stir men to labor, patience, hope, endeavor, holiness, they generally say something about the Second Advent.

"Beloved! so live from day to day, in duty and devotion, that your Lord's Coming would be timely . . . What will it be to see Him reign upon the earth? . . . I think that watching for His Coming means—acting just as you wish to be acting if He were to come. O, beloved! let us try every morning to get up as if that were the morning in which Christ would come; when we go to bed at night, may we lie down with this thought: Perhaps I shall be awakened—by the greatest of all cries, 'The Lord is come.' What a check, what an incentive, what a bridle, what a spur, such thoughts as these would be to us!"

The China Inland Mission has been one of the most used and honored Foreign Missionary Societies of modern times. Its founder was Dr. J. Hudson Taylor. What this good man wrote in regard to the coming again of the Lord clearly attests the mighty influence the doctrine had in regard to the whole of his life work. He wrote of it: "Very early in my life the subject of our Lord's near Return was brought before me. I went carefully through all the passages of the Bible; and the result was it gave me to see that the hope of the Coming of the Lord is the paramount motive in the New Testament for earnest holy service here! Someone speaks of it as cutting the nerve of missionary effort. I wish to bear personal testimony that it has been the greatest personal spur to me in missionary service! . . . There is first the Coming of the Lord for His saints, and then His Coming with them, and we hasten His Coming . . . by doing all that in us lies to carry the Gospel everywhere."

Dr. R. A. Torrey, another of our great evangelists, has been just as definite in regard to the motive power for holy living and service, the influence of this doctrine has been. "Suddenly, unexpectedly, without previous announcement! The world going on as usual—balls, theatres, operas, concerts, weddings, family gatherings, and prayer meetings, and everything else—suddenly—our Lord shall descend! It will take His true Church by surprise, but it won't catch them like a thief! . . . You and I ought to be ready any moment. That doesn't mean we should neglect our duties; for my part, I hope I shall be found performing mine—but with watchful eye and watchful ear.

"Never be doing anything that you would not like to be overtaken by the Lord in doing. That would settle a good many questions about where we shall go, etc. I cannot tell you how this has entered into every phrase of my past life —temporal life—domestic life—recreations, my relations with every member of my family, everything else! Is this the thing I would like to be found doing if my Lord should come? It brings a wonderful simplicity into my life."

Many other such testimonies might here be given. But, there is no need. Enough is here to show the mighty impulse the great awakening has had, since the time of its commencing. Because of it, Gospel ministry has been mightily quickened, millions of the souls for whom Christ died have entered salvation; philanthropic enterprise has been greatly multiplied, and a host of missionaries have gone out to the ends of the earth with the message of life. More than that, it may be, that it has been the widespread acceptance of this doctrine that has prevented the complete decadence of Christian faith. For, it is only since the beginning of the raising of the Midnight Cry, that Modernism, with its fearful and paralysing effect in regard to spiritual religion, has arisen. During the same era, it is, that the innumerable army of false cults has come into being. These have swept millions of people from the Churches into heresy and apostasy. God only knows what would have been, so far as Christian testimony is concerned, had not the message of the coming again of God's Son to this world, gripped the souls of so many people. No one, who has responded to the message of the Midnight Cry, ever doubts the absolute accuracy of the Sacred Scriptures. In fact,

when Rationalism has done its worst, the faith of the student of Divine Prophecy only is strengthened. For he, indeed, has learned therein, that all such turning away from the Faith, as is now all around to be seen, was Divinely foretold to characterise the days immediately before the return of Christ.

Strange.

Yes, it is a very strange thing, indeed. Many Church leaders will not believe in the Bible doctrine of the Second Advent. I myself have heard influential preachers declare that they refused to believe that the Son of God is again coming personally into this world. Dr. A. J. Gordon mentions the expression of a leading theologian in an address given before a large gathering of professed Christian people. He said, "If Jesus Christ has declayed His Coming for 1800 years, there is no reason to suppose that He may not delay it for a million eight hundred years longer." At that, the great congregation broke out into hearty applause. I am afraid there are many professors of religion not any different now. They do not want the Lord to come. How could they? They are perfectly satisfied with things as they are. Different though is the attitude of true believers as Divine expression is given to it, as is written, about at the close of the Bible. When the Lord there says, "Behold, I come quickly," the answer is given, "Amen! Even so come, Lord Jesus."

I do verily believe, that every truly regenerate believer in the Gospel of Jesus Christ just feels precisely like that now. The others will not believe, neither will they understand.

It is certainly a strange irony in regard to the present world-situation, that men outside the Church read the Signs of the Times with keener eyes than do the majority of preachers. Thus writes a distinguished novelist, whose works sell by the hundred thousand, in hundreds of languages:

"All things that Christ prophesied are coming to pass so quickly that I wonder most people do not realise it, and I specially wonder at the laxity and apathy of the Churches, except for the fact that this also was prophesied. Some of us will live to see a time of terror, and that before long. The

blasphemous things which are being done in the world cannot go on much longer without punishment. We know by history that deliberate scorn of God and Divine things has always been met by retribution of a sudden and terrible nature, and it will be so again."

D. M. Panton mentions that some time back, Dr. Kelman asked an American man of science his solution of the problems of modern city life. "An Emperor!" came the answer, swift and decisive. "An Emperor?" asked Dr. Kelman, in surprise; "I thought you had done with all that in America. Besides, your Emperor would need to be a very wonderful man, incapable of mistakes, and extraordinarily competent for leadership." "Precisely," was the quiet reply: "AND WE KNOW THE MAN; We are waiting for Him, and His name is JESUS." "The thrill of that reply," says Dr. Kelman, "will never leave me."

A Jewish Awakening.

This is not only in regard to the renascence of their nation, which surely is a startling phenomenon, in regard to the strange times to which our generation has come. But, rather, in regard to universal Jewish expectation concerning the near coming of their Messiah. Many devout Jews have already found their way back to the Holy Land, because of this expectation. And many others among the Jews, as well, are coming into the knowledge of Jesus Christ as their long promised Deliverer. Indeed, on the average, more Jews are being converted, now, to Christian faith than are being converted from among Gentile peoples.

The Jewish awakening, in regard to the near coming of the Messiah, commenced a few years ago, through Mr. Joseph Rabinowitch, a pious and devoted Jew, residing in Kisehnieff, in South Russia. While trying to solve the problem of the return of his people to their own land, and by a diligent examination of Scripture, he was marvellously led to see that Jesus of Nazareth, whom they rejected and slew, was indeed the true Messiah, and that now, if they—the Jews—confessed their sin in rejecting Him, He, the risen One, in Heaven, who has the key to Palestine, would speedily open the land for their return. Thousands of Jews have already accepted his testimony and are awaiting earnestly

for their restoration by Jesus, Who is now their sole hope for deliverance and final blessing in their own land.

Another significant circumstance is that, among the Arab peoples, who are also first cousins to the Jews, there has also arisen solemn conviction that the Messiah is near at hand. Not here can be mentioned the various other movements, all through human life, which now, somehow, seem to relate to the Midnight Cry, and the coming of the Divine Bridegroom. The expectation of some impending mighty change, in regard to this world's affairs, is well nigh universal; almost the whole world seems on the tip-toe of expectancy about something. But, it is the wise that understand.

Everything now is as the Lord said would be. In the Time of the End the wise shall understand. It should now be quite evident. It is that, the wise are now doing. And they are going out to meet the Bridegroom.

Are you, then, among those who are going out to meet Him? Probably you have the lamp of profession, but have you also the oil of the Holy Spirit in your vessel? Have you been born from above? Are you ready to crown Him King? I have read somewhere, that when Canon Farrar was acting as Chaplain to Queen Victoria, he visited her when she was ill. She had been reading something about the Second Coming of the Lord, and she said, "Chaplain, what do you think about the Second Coming of the Lord?" The reply of the Chaplain is not recorded, but as he left he said, "Your Majesty, why have you asked me that question?" "Oh," she said, "I wish He would come while I am alive, for nothing would give me more pleasure than with my own hands to give Him the crown of Great Britain and India!" And the same love is what He should have from you, now. Your gift should be the offering of your life. Crown Him King! Let Him reign in your heart here, and you will reign with Him then, in His Glory!

CHAPTER VII.

The Sign of Increasing Knowledge and a World on Wheels.

"Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." (Dan. 12-4.)

The foretold Signs of the Times are very numerous and they also are decidedly vivid. Their description is from God, and the plain intention of them is that the believer should know when the Coming again of his Lord, from Heaven, is near at hand. That only such was in the Divine purpose, when causing these signs to be given, is clearly evident from our Saviour's own words: "When ye shall see these things, ye shall know that He is near, even at the doors." He also said: "When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh."

So then, the Divinely predicted things are to be surely and distinctly perceived by those for whose information their description is given by the men inspired of God to do it. It is right at the time when all these things are to be seen in actual operation, that the Christian believer is then to know that the coming again of His Lord is near. He may not know the day or the hour, but He will, at least, know that the wonderful event is very near. Indeed, so close at hand will the coming of the Lord seem then to be, that every other circumstance in the believer's life will be greatly affected by the startling knowledge. In a peculiar sense, he will be going out to meet the Bridegroom. The professing Christian, not so doing, will then be like unto the foolish virgins, who carried lamps but had no oil. The Divine rebuke for all such may very well be the same as was given to the Jews nineteen hundred years before: "O ye hypo-

crites, ye can discern the face of the sky, but can ye not discern the Signs of the Times?"

About nothing else indeed was our Lord's instruction ever more urgent. For such urgency very clear reason is given. He said: "Watch ye, therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man." Hardly can we imagine more earnest exhortation than is here. Why the urgency in regard to it? The answer is given. "For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth." (Luke, 21, 35.) So that those not then found ready to go away with the Lord will be left to the time of greatest tribulation this world has ever known.

The Sign now to have special consideration has to do with certain recent startling developments in regard to locomotion and modern science. Than this there hardly can be a sign more distinct and vivid. And regarding it there are really a much greater number of illuminating Scriptures available than many, even very well-informed Christians, may well imagine. But we shall find that it was only as the things foretold were then to be in actual operation, that the Divine description of them would really come to be understood. It was that very thing was implied in what the Lord God said to Daniel: "Thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end."

The clear meaning of such a saying could only be, that the things then declared were not to be understood, until the unfolding circumstances of the End Time would supply their key. Not till then would the wise be able to understand. At that time, would the things of God's Word, hitherto unintelligible, come to have clear and distinct significance for the people of God. Unfolding conditions, peculiar to a certain clearly defined time, would then throw a flood of light upon Scriptures that never before could ever be discerned. The reasonableness of such a claim will become quite evident as we go on to the study of the special subject now before us. And this is modern

Rapidity of Travel

as one of the great Prophetic Signs of the Times. For indeed, rapid movement all over the earth, in regard to uni-

versal human experience in the Last Days, is one of the more outstanding things God told Daniel would surely come to be seen. Very distinct indeed were the Divine words in this regard: "Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." (Dan., 12, 4.)

Now, in regard to this saying, everything around us goes to show, that never before, as now, could its meaning be perceived. The older commentators have always been hard put to in order to explain it. Its meaning was usually changed into metaphor of a sort that only intensified the general misunderstanding in regard to its purpose. Some thought it referred to running to and fro in the Scriptures, and that the increase of knowledge meant that there would come to be a clearer understanding of the book of Daniel, specially in the closing days of the Times of the Gentiles.

The clearest rendering ever given was that by the scholar Gesenius, who said, that the words, "Many shall run to and fro," means "to go to and fro, hither and thither, in haste, to go over the earth, or land, in travel."

But now is there really no difficulty whatever in the understanding of this and many other Scriptures of like character in connection with the recent amazing developments that have come about, in regard to world transport. The saying of God to Daniel, the prophet, concerning many running to and fro in the last days, is now as clear as daylight in the face of universal modern scientific development.

Just think of the difference now to what used to be, in regard to means of locomotion. So far as we know, when our Lord was here, in all His journeyings, He invariably walked, excepting once, when He rode on the back of an ass. Certainly, there were chariots available even in those early times, but these were only used by the wealthy and great. And, as methods of travel improved, it was still only the very well-to-do who could ever afford to travel anywhere much. The multitude hardly ever moved away from their own home locality.

Early Civilisation.

Such a condition, as that indicated, was not because the former generations were so much more backward than are the people of now. Indeed, thousands of years before the

Christian era commenced, the Egyptians had home furnishings of a perfectly charming description. The bathing appointments of their fine homes would not now disgrace even the most elaborate modern mansion. They had parasols and fishing rods, delicately carved chessmen and settees. While the ladies at their afternoon calls, even then, took dainty sips out of "fancy" cups, and as we learn from the mural paintings, they artfully displayed finger and ear rings with a measure of satisfaction that was often slightly tinged with envy on the part of others.

A very long time before our Lord came into the world, the Egyptians built and utilised mighty pyramids. They set up temples of a vast extent, and erected the most gorgeous of palaces. In ancient Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar was able to raise up a mighty metropolis, grander and more wonderful, by a long way, than any of the great cities of modern times. There were to be seen those fairy-like hanging gardens, watered by powerful hydraulic engines, and most wonderful in their collection of all kinds of exotic plants and trees which were the wonder of the ages. Regal and ornate palaces, miles in extent, bordered the long river bank. King Ahasuerus, at one time, the monarch of one hundred and twenty provinces, stretching away from Ethiopia to India, could then give a feast, lasting a hundred and eighty days, to all his princes and mighty men, and similar entertainment for the space of a week to the whole population of his capital city, Susa. Here was to be seen the "white, green and azure hangings fastened with cords of silk and purple to silver rings, and here also were pillars of marble, along with couches of gold and silver, set on a pavement of alabaster, white marble and mother of pearl. They gave them to drink in golden vessels, and royal wine was mixed for them in royal measure. They drank also, or not, according to the commandment of the king." (Esther, 1, 4-8.)

Thousands of years ago, at Nineveh there was a Public Library then in existence, where, by registering one's name and address, could be obtained from the librarians in attendance scientific works, such as tables and observations concerning the planets Dilbat or Venus.

Great and beautiful pictures have been found that were painted thousands of years before. At the same early time, were set up by the ancients, mighty statues and other

stupendous sculptured works, hundreds of tons in weight, yet every feature in their carving almost perfect in delineation. Pieces of music that were produced, long before Christ came, have been recently discovered, the rhythm, harmony and quality of which are admitted to be loftier and more exalted than even the best music of more recent times. Then ships, so vast, were built that a crew of 4000 sailors was required to man each of them.

Whole books could now be filled with thrilling description of the rich and complex civilisations of India and Egypt, Assyria and Persia, Phoenicia and Carthage, Greece and Rome. Accounts have come down to us in regard to the world's earliest times, of the pomp and power, ordinances of justice, architecture, horticulture, palaces, temples, theatres, baths, the swift galleys, the admirably marshalled and magnificently equipped phalanxes and legions. Other books could well be written, concerning the skill of the ancients in the construction and the setting up of massive bronze statues and concerning their abilities in regard to the doing of many other things. Our own civilisation may be very great, but Archaeology and other methods of research are clearly showing that, in but very little, if any, was the world then behind us.

Yet, here for us is surely an important circumstance. In regard to locomotion, and the means of transport generally, for five and a half thousands of years, the swiftest methods of travel available in the world were either that of horseback riding or chariot driving. The only other means then of getting about was by the use of the mule, or just by walking. Yet do we find in the Sacred Scriptures, written thousands of years ago, solemn declaration given to the effect, that in the closing days of this Age, when the wise would know that the return of Christ would be near at hand, it would come to be, that men would then be found rapidly travelling all over the earth by methods never before dreamt of in all human experience. As already indicated, this is clearly one of the most startling of the signs in regard to the Time of the End. And what we are going now to see is, that all of this amazing mechanical development, in regard to means of locomotion, is invariably associated, in the Prophetic Scriptures, with the coming again of God's Son to this world.

Transport Developments.

Carriages first appeared in England about A.D. 1380. For a long time these were only used by the very rich, then specially for wealthy invalids. Private coaches were introduced in 1510, and public coaches came in 1662. Concerning these, the advertisement then announced in Manchester, England, was as follows: "Incredible as it may appear, the coach will arrive in London in four and a half days." Now, the railway train covers the same distance in about four hours. A fast motor car can do the journey in about two hours, while an aeroplane could get over the distance in less than an hour. Great steamships now travel the ocean up to thirty miles an hour. Motor vehicles have attained a speed of more than 200 miles in sixty minutes, while flying machines have even gone at a greater rate of speed, and the radio now practically annihilates time altogether by the rapidity with which sound is flung through space. Now, all of this marvellous scientific development, specially in regard to rapidity of transport, would seem to have the most precise description in Prophetic Scripture, and is clearly to be taken as one of the outstanding signs of the Time of the End. For it was surely with such a purpose in view, that God said to Daniel, that at this very time, many should run to and fro and knowledge also should be increased.

The Motor Car.

It is in the book of the prophet Nahum wherein we have the most obvious Prophetic description, possible, of our modern automobile. In order to understand the significance of all that is there said, by the prophet, it is necessary to perceive the ultimate aspect of everything contained in Nahum's rather short book of Divine Prophecy. For, whatever may have been its implication, in regard to past history, the ultimate intention of all that is said in the book is clear enough for anything. Though the world still awaits the complete fulfilment of all that is here foretold by the prophet Nahum.

The first chapter makes very distinct reference to that awful time, called "The Great Tribulation, with which, all Scripture shows, this Gospel Age is to end, and the Times of the Gentiles" are to close. From the beginning of the

book, there are Scripture references that can only be understood, in the light of what the Bible elsewhere declares about what surely is going to be, in the coming terrible time.

Verse two says: "God is jealous, and the Lord revengeth; the Lord revengeth and is furious; the Lord will take vengeance on His adversaries, and He reserveth wrath for His enemies." The Modernist will say that this prophetic declaration gives only the Old Testament writer's conception of God, whatever that may mean. But it is precisely the same thing as is said by the equally inspired New Testament writer, concerning the same Time of the End. For example, in 2 Thess., chapter one, we are told that "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power." There is thus really no difference in that account, from the description given in the first chapter of Nahum. And it surely is the Coming of the Lord, in glory, that, there, has very clear description: "The mountains quake at Him, and the hills melt, and the earth is burned at His Presence, yea, the world, and all that dwell therein. Who can stand before His indignation? and who can abide the fierceness of His anger? His fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by Him."

There are those who will say, that this picture is not at all like the God of love, that is revealed by Jesus Christ in the New Testament. But our Blessed Lord also spoke as distinctly of the same terrific time of tribulation, as is surely then going to be in the Time of the End. And the God, Who thus declares Himself, is the only God ever made known in the Bible. And, beside Him, there is none other God. Verse eight tells it, that, "with an overrunning flood He will make an utter end of the place thereof, and the darkness shall pursue His enemies." It should be clearly understood, always, that God "will not at all acquit the wicked." For, "He is just and the Justifier of him which believeth in Jesus," alone, because His Holy law was fully vindicated on Calvary's cross. So that now is available, for all men, the message of the Gospel: "He that believeth on the Son

hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life but the **wrath of God abideth on him.**" (John, 3-36.)

In Nahum, the very same thing finds as precise expression. There we go on to read that, "The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; and He knoweth them that trust Him."

The thing, thus affirmed, is always true, but especially is this to be so in regard to the suffering remnant of Israel, at the Time of the Great Tribulation. To them, is then to come final deliverance. Already have we seen in Daniel twelve, how God tells the Prophet of that very Time of Trouble, such as never was since there was a nation. Then it was said to Daniel, that, "at that time, thy people shall be delivered."

It is the same thing, exactly that is said, in the first chapter of Nahum. For there, God says, also in regard to Daniel's people, the Jews, "Though I have afflicted thee, I will afflict thee no more. For now will I break his yoke from off thee, and I will burst his bonds in sunder."

The one there mentioned, whose yoke is to be broken, is surely the Antichrist, the final oppressor of the Jews, in the closing days of this Age. It is only by realising this, that we can properly understand verse 14, in chapter one, and also, as well, verse one, in chapter two.

Israel's Deliverance.

It is this final deliverance of the Jewish people that is pictured in the second verse of chapter two. The thing is there seen in prophetic anticipation, as it is to ultimately be. "For the Lord hath turned away the excellency of Jacob, as the excellency of Israel: for the emptiers have emptied them out, and marred their vine branches."

To know what this verse means, we have to seek understanding regarding the two expressions here given: "The excellency of Jacob" and "The excellency of Israel." The excellency of Jacob has to be turned away as the excellency of Israel. What, then, was to be, this turning away of the excellency of Jacob, in regard to the excellency of Israel? To know this, we have to go right away back to the account of what happened in the case of Jacob, the father of Israel's race.

It will here be remembered how that Jacob had to flee from home and continue away from it in exile for many long years. No wealth had he when he went out. The desert sand was his couch, and a stone his pillow. For many years he toiled as a bond servant. Even his own relatives made his lot hard for him. So difficult was Jacob's position then, that prosperity seemed well nigh impossible of attainment. Yet, how wonderful was the prosperity achieved! So that when the time came for his return home to his own land, what a mighty demonstration of wealth was then to be seen! There were the sheep and the oxen; the goats and the kine; the cows and the bulls; the asses and the camels; the men servants and the maid servants; and the wives and children. It was a mighty concourse, all of it belonging to Jacob, that, on that wonderful day, crossed over the brook Jabbok, in the golden light of the westering sun. Down to the last detail, there was in evidence, the remarkable shrewdness, that had made possible the attainment of such great wealth. On hearing that his brother Esau was coming out to meet him, we are told how Jacob then divided the people that were with him, and the flocks and the herds, and the camels into two bands. Certainly, there was here a great and artistic striving after effect. And it may be that the successful modern Jew is not much behind now in regard to this very artistic pretentiousness!

A New Condition.

There can be no doubt, but that, when Jacob had seen the last of this great demonstration of his wealth and commercial achievement go over the brook Jabbok, in the time of that quiet evening hour, the difference between his going out and his coming back would have been much then in his mind. It may have been that this studied arrangement of all his gains was intended to impress his brother Esau. Yet by some strange impulse, Jacob continues alone, through the night, by the brook, and prays. And then came the experience of his life. "There wrestled a man with him, until the breaking of the day." Here was for him a terrific ordeal, and one that was really typical of the whole of Jacob's life in his relationship to God. Jacob had never been backward in the setting up of altars, in seeking the

blessing of God and in the arranging for the paying of tithes, but it would seem that it was his own way of doing things, until now, the patriarch had ever desired the Almighty to bless. He was now going to learn that the highest achievement in life is not the asking of God to bless our own scheme of things, but rather to find out the Divine plan concerning everything, and then to gladly yield to that. "Not my will, but Thine, be done," is for all time the only true way into blessedness and Divine service.

But now the time has come when Jacob must come into harmony with God's covenant purpose. So we read of the One wrestling all through the night with the Patriarch: "And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him."

In this way Jacob was lamed. Always after, he halted in his walk. He was never the same as before. That night, by the brook, Jacob learned something new. He was no longer able to wrestle, but he could, at least, hold on. "And He said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let Thee go, except thou bless me."

"And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob." Yes, Jacob had to say his name. Jacob, supplanter, the shrewd, sagacious, sharp man of affairs, whose policy had ever been to make the best of both worlds, especially of this present world. The excellency of Jacob was the excellency of the fairly upright and prosperous man of the world. So that, to be in the will of God, another excellency had to become his. Here it is: "Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed."

See the difference. The excellency of Israel, meaning prince, is that of the one who has at last prevailed with God. From then on, this man was no longer Jacob, but Israel, a prince before God. An entirely new experience became his. As he himself said, at the time when he called the name of the place Peniel, because there he had seen the face of God, and his life was preserved.

A Nation to be Regenerated.

It is as we go back to our consideration of the Nahum prophecy, that we learn that what happened Jacob in that

strange night experience at Jabbok, is surely going to happen, at the Coming again of their Messiah, our Lord Jesus Christ, to all the descendants of Jacob, then on the earth. The excellency of Jacob, the Jew, is to be changed into the excellency of Israel, the prince with God. How? In the darkness of the Great Tribulation, that is surely coming, the Jews are to be brought into the knowledge of God, as happened in the case of their father Jacob. Many of them will by then have gone back to the covenant land, as Jacob had done, having brought back their silver and their gold with them, as we are told in Isaiah. Strange indeed, is it, that this very evidence of ultimate Jewish commercial prosperity should have so much prophetic attestation, concerning the time of the Jews' return. The great, latter day wealth of the Jews is to be as is the excellency of Jacob, the Jew, but all that is to be changed as the excellency of Israel. That change will happen through their coming to see God face to face. For it is then they are to see Him Whom they pierced. And in that way a nation is to be born in a day. To them are all things to become new. The whole nation is to become, what God had intended from the beginning it should be: a kingdom of priests unto God. And so will it continue right through the reign of Christ in the Millennium.

Preparation Necessary.

As Nahum and the other prophets show, it is simply through much tribulation the Jews are to enter into the Kingdom. So that, the changing of the excellency of Jacob into the excellency of Israel entails going through a distinctly fiery process. The emptiers are again to empty out the Jewish people and also will again mar their vine branches. That is to be in the day of God's preparation. And that preparation is to fit the Jews for their new relationship to God. Just as Jacob had to be brought low, to be able to see the face of God, even so are the Jews to be humbled in the dust, that they may be prepared to see Him Whom they pierced. The second chapter of Nahum, specially verses two and three, makes luminous, now, the whole trying ordeal of the Great Tribulation, so far as the Jews are concerned.

"The shield of his mighty men is made red, the valiant men are in scarlet: the chariots shall be with flaming torches IN THE DAY OF HIS PREPARATION, and the fir trees shall be terribly shaken. The chariots shall rage in the streets, they shall jostle one against another in the broad ways: they shall seem like torches, they shall run like the lightnings."

Everything here is of intense interest, in the light of the things now happening all around us. To Daniel, God had said that in the Time of the End, many shall be travelling swiftly over the earth. Here, through Nahum, is the prophetic picture of the means by which such rapid transport was then to be possible. It is to be in the day of God's preparation. This we have already considered. The mighty and valiant men of some great leader are now mentioned as being distinguished by red and scarlet color. This is the one who dasheth in pieces in the time of Israel's final preparation. He is therefore the Last Day chief persecutor of the Jewish race. I think he is the Beast of Revelation, who then is to receive his power and his throne from the great red dragon, the Devil.

The Color is Red.

It is surely not now without significance, that the distinguishing color for Communism, the coming world power, is red. The Russian armies are arrayed in red. It is the song of "The Red Flag," the people now sing. And, here is God's Word, written thousands of years ago, showing that the color of the last oppressor of the Jewish people will be distinctly red.

Methods of Travel, Then.

In the passage before us, here is something that should have a real importance for us now. "The chariots shall be with," or like "flaming torches." Another rendering of this statement is even more suggestive. It is: "The chariots flash with steel in the day of his preparation." The chariots of Tutankhamen, recently discovered at Luxor, in Egypt, were found to be overlaid with sheet gold. In Judges, iv., 3, special mention is made of the fact that then there were chariots made of iron. But here, it is Divinely foretold, that in the time when the Second Coming of Jesus Christ is at hand, the chariots will flash with steel. And

it is surely that they now do. And here it is said that the noise and thud of them shall shake the trees. "They shall rage in the streets. They shall jostle one against another in the broad ways." That is, they shall be so powerful that they will hustle each other as they tear along the specially broad roads, that will then have been prepared for their use. And is that not, indeed, the outstanding problem for all governing authorities now? Millions of money have to be spent in widening and preparing roads for the modern chariots, holding fire in them and encased with steel, such as those that now jostle each other as they thunder along the broadways. And they do seem exactly like torches, and certainly do they now appear to run like the lightnings. So that, it would scarcely be at all possible to imagine a picture of the modern means of locomotion more accurate than is given in the book of Nahum. Such a description can only be from God. For only God knows the end of everything from the beginning.

The motor vehicle has only been on the road something like thirty years. The output this very year is expected to reach 5,800,000 vehicles, valued at £870,000,000. But the prophetic description of motor-crowded broadways was given more than 2500 years ago. So that it should now be quite clear to us, that the account was written and handed down, that we should know by these things that the Coming again of the Lord from Heaven would then be near at hand. In a later chapter, we shall also see how such mechanical means of transport are also foretold to be in use in connection with the last great war that is to be. We also find that every other prophetic description of that awful impending tragedy is always, in this regard, terribly up to date. But now, it is for us to go on to see how, that all such recent astonishing development, in regard to locomotion and science, was all of it Divinely foretold, so that, by it all, God's dear people would know the very time when the return of their Lord was to be right near at hand.

Flying Men.

Recent developments, in regard to air transport, were all of them as distinctly prophesied to be among the numerous signs of the closing days of this Age. There is nothing clearer in all God's Word. Though, again, we see, as God

indicated it would be, to Daniel, it is not until now, that the Scriptures referring to these things could ever be properly understood. But what was so long ago written, is now fast becoming clear to the student of Divine things. The mention here, of a few more passages from the Blessed Book, will possibly help to make my meaning more apparent, as I do trust they will.

In the sixtieth chapter of the prophet Isaiah, at the time, as we have already seen, in a previous study, when the sons of Israel are being returned to their own land in the ships of Tarshish, a strange thing is then given expression. The prophet, in his ecstatic vision, is projected in thought, as it were, to the time of consummation. He then sees what he cannot understand. As he cries out, he seems then to be as Daniel was. He cannot understand, what only was to be understood in the latter days. It was not for him to know. Not, until the Time of the End, would the wise have understanding.

The prophet cries: "Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows?"

Well, who are they? No commentator, before now, really could tell. How ever could they, anyway? For, who, before our day, could imagine men flying through the air, just like birds, as they are doing now? Even, just a few years ago, such a thing was not thought to be possible. But now, men do fly along as a cloud, and they certainly sweep right down to their hangars just like the birds, even as the prophet in vision saw them do.

And also in Isaiah, 31, 5, God shows how He will bring out the ultimate deliverance of Jerusalem, from its last awful ordeal: "As birds flying, so will the Lord of hosts defend Jerusalem." So that, then, it is by aerial movement Jerusalem is, at that coming awful time, to be defended. Likewise, in chapter one, of the book of Habakkuk, it is told there of the final invasion of Palestine by the nations. And also, it says of them, that, "They shall fly as the eagle, that hasteth to eat." In Isaiah eight, it is also told how that the Assyrian yet, with his wings, shall fill the breadth of Immanuel's Land. Only a huge number of airships, flying over the Holy Land, can ever properly fill out this prophetic picture of this Last Day condition in regard to Palestine.

Then, the prophet also speaks of "the land shadowing with wings." This would suggest, surely, a presentation of the very earth darkened by the shadow of numerous overhead wings, such as would be with a great fleet of airships overhead.

The immense horde of warring locusts, that are mentioned in Revelation, chapter nine, are all said to have wings. The symbolic picture, therein given, of contending armies has, for God's people now, a meaning that never before could be perceived. As they dash into battle, it says, "The sound of their wings was as the sound of many horses running to battle." That is, it is with wings they rush to the battle, just as great airships are likely to be employed in the next great war.

The symbolic women of Zechariah, with the wind in their wings, that were like the wings of a stork, that carried the ephah to the land of Shinar, also suggest the means of transport that will be, at the time indicated, used in regard to commerce.

Then, in the twelfth chapter of Revelation, is also given a really thrilling account of the means of transport that will be brought into operation, in connection with the escape of the faithful remnant of Israel, as typified by the mystic women, in the time of the Great Tribulation. There, it says, speaking of the woman, which is the symbol of the suffering remnant of Israel that she was given "two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness into her place."

This may mean, that at that time of awful trial, the Jews will be helped by a nation whose symbol is the eagle. I rather think it refers to the means, then to be used, in delivering the distressed people. For it is probably by airships, the suffering Jews will then escape to Petra, now believed to be the place so long ago prepared for them.

Airplanes and the Next War.

Thus may be realised the awful conditions that will operate in the final war. The anticipations of leading men now certainly coincide with the terrible particulars, made known through the Prophetic Scriptures.

Mr. Hudson Maxim, the inventor of smokeless powder, has issued a solemn warning. He says: "More than twenty

years ago I predicted many things for aviation which, at that time, were thought fanciful and impracticable—and by some impossible, but which, nevertheless; have been accomplished. I predicted that the airplane in warfare would furnish the eyes of armies and navies. I predicted that the airplane would make it necessary in future warfare to conquer the sky before success on land could be obtained. I predicted that the airplane, which at that time could not be taken up in flight, except in the quiet of the evening air, would be so developed that it could rise in a whirlpool. These things have all been accomplished.

"Twenty years ago I claimed that in the next great war poison gases would be employed—notwithstanding the fact that they were supposed to be prohibited by international agreement.

"I predicted that torch bombs would be thrown upon the works of an enemy to illuminate them at night. I predicted also the use of smoke-producing bombs on land and sea for producing a smoke screen, to cover the movements of ships at sea and armies on the field."

But listen to Mr. Maxim's prediction about the next war. This reads like a chapter out of the book of Revelation, to which he refers:

"I now predict that in the next great war the airplane is going to play the most important part of all arms of Naval and Military service. It was formerly supposed that no nation would dare to use poison gases for fear of retaliation. For the same reason it is now believed by many that no nation would dare to spread germs of diseases.

"In the next great war not only will the most deadly poison gases be spread broadcast over actual contending forces, both on land and sea, but also over inland cities. Not only will actual fighters be attacked, but non-combatants also will be attacked. In the next great war we may look for the most disastrous results from the use of the airplane as a sower of death and destruction. We are going to see inland cities smothered in poison gases, and tens of thousands of the inhabitants, men, women and children, killed in a few minutes.

"I have lately seen in the press announcements that we have a poison gas, three drops of which, striking the body of

a man, will result in certain death, and the vapor from one drop will surely be fatal.

"There will be no place that one may hide himself and be safe from attack. All non-combatants will be exposed to destruction, as the sinful, according to Revelation, are to be exposed on the Judgment Day."

As was said by Mr. Panton: "Science, devoted to annihilation, now menaces the world. Machine guns spitting forth a fan-shaped tail of 6000 bullets a minute: aeroplanes at a height of 10 to 15 miles, dropping bombs weighing 4300lbs., and creating destruction over the radius of a mile; guns, with a range of 150 miles, and tanks which concealed in their own smoke can outdistance the fleetest hound—all these are things that are here now."

Says the "Manchester Guardian": "If destructive science is to remain dominant, there is no salvation in store for the world. 'Why not?' replies the hard-head; 'it has always been the view and the world has gone on.' Quite true! But the last few years have brought a startling change in the conditions of existence—a change that has not yet been fully realised. Destructive science has gone ahead out of all proportion. It is developing so fast that each irresponsible assertion of national rights or interests must bring the world appreciably nearer ruin. Without any doubt whatever, the powers of destruction are gaining fast on the powers of creation and construction."

Mr. Edison said, not so long ago: "There is nothing to prevent twenty to thirty aeroplanes flying to-morrow over London's millions with a gas which can suffocate those millions in three hours."

Surely, then, it is no wonder, that our blessed Lord, knowing well all these things beforehand, should solemnly warn such a generation as is ours, with an earnest urgency! "Watch ye, therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass."

Wireless Transmission.

The Rev. D. M. Panton speaks of radio broadcasting as being one of the most wonderful things of our astonishing age. He writes: "When Stanley found Livingstone at Ujiji, the letters he carried were two years old: a telegram now

covers the distance in one-twentieth of a second. At a railway exhibition in Washington recently, Mr. Morton, the Secretary of the Navy, opened a telegraph switch at midnight, starting a time signal round the world, while a map, 21 feet by 42 feet, showed its progress by electric bulbs. The signal circled the globe in seven seconds. Most wonderful of all, during the presidential address at the British Association of Science, in Liverpool, Sir Ernest Rutherford's voice, which took one-fifth of a second to reach the back of the hall, took only one-fiftieth of a second to reach the north of Scotland; so that the address was heard in Aberdeen ten times more quickly than on the back benches of the hall in Liverpool."

Radio experts now affirm that there is nothing to prevent the whole of the wireless stations of Europe, Africa and Asia being so linked up that one voice could be heard everywhere. Dr. Parkes Cadman, we are told, has relinquished his pastorate in order to preach every Sunday to the 100,000,000 listeners of the American Broadcasting Stations.

We are therefore, surely, getting close up to the time when, "The Word of the Lord shall go forth from Jerusalem" and all the earth shall hear. So that now all those wonderful Scriptures that have so clearly foretold the many such marvellous things that now operate all over this earth, should have from us the most solemn consideration. Why, it is really a thrilling experience to contemplate the great wonders of our time, with the open Bible in our Hand. For example, when God speaks His question to Job, "Canst thou send lightnings, that they may go, and say unto thee, Here we are?" (Job, 38-35). Is it not something just like that, that is now happening everywhere in the use of the radio! The Hebrew word, in this particular passage, rendered lightnings, is also given as "emanations," "outgoings," "vibrations," just as happens in all wireless communication. We may not yet know so very much about electricity; but the Bible seems to have a great many references, in regard to this mysterious power, that only now, like these other things, are becoming possible of understanding.

In Psalm, 65-8, we read: "Thou makest the outgoings of the morning and evening to rejoice." When Dr. Lee De Forest announced that he had made the vacuum tube of

the radio, to make possible the hearing of such beautiful music as we now can have, then did this, and other Scriptures too, become easier of understanding. We read in Job, also, how the morning stars sang for joy. Now, it is announced that Gen. Gustave Ferrie and his radio assistants have perfected an apparatus that is actually hearing the voice of the stars. For they have turned the light of the stars into electric signals. So that your watch can now be set, not alone by sun time, but by star time as well. There are more wonderful things yet that we are going to find out, in regard to the blessed Word of the Living God. For all of these things are, as yet, only in their infancy.

And it is just when our Lord is King over all the earth, that the many wonderful things so long ago foretold by the Holy men of God, are to have their full and complete consummation.

Knowledge Also.

Yes, God also told Daniel that in the Time of the End, knowledge was to be increased. Wonderful indeed is the increase of knowledge that has come to the world these last days. Said Lord Balfour: "I do not believe that we yet realise the magnitude of the growth of knowledge that has taken place in three generations, in the sixty or ninety years drawing to a conclusion: our whole view of the world has been revolutionised in that time, our whole view of history, our whole view of science, our whole conception of the material world, our whole knowledge of the growth of progress."

Early in the Christian era, the number of stars catalogued by Hipparchus was 1022. The earliest telescopes at the beginning of the nineteenth century revealed 6748. Now, is it said that the great telescopes actually make known 50,000,000 stars. In the beginning of the nineteenth century, the record number of books turned out in one year was 93. Now, in England alone, the number is about 10,000. Of one edition alone, of Everyman's Library, 14,000,000 volumes have been sold.

Great discoveries are certainly being made, in regard to the wonderful mysteries of life and being, that operate

all around us, but the world is probably soon to make the mightiest discovery that has ever thrilled the universe. The glory of the Son of God is going to fill the heavens. For, when He appears in glory, then also is to appear with Him every redeemed soul, and all the holy angels as well.

Regarding Material Progress,

let me hasten to say that such conditions, as have been mentioned, need not of themselves be evil. All the scientific developments of our day are of God. Their very possibility is the Divine gift to the world. We cannot forget that these things were always available, but men did not always know how to bring them into service. To harness the lightnings was just as possible 2000 years ago as now, if people had only known how to do it. Indeed, all this marvellous discovery can have been permitted in these last days to show how wonderfully the Almighty will regenerate and replenish the world for the Millennial Age when the desert is to be made to blossom as the garden of the Lord. At anyrate, the scientific possibilities of our age must have always been known to the Creator, and probably also to many of the ancients of our race. Noah's ark was as wonderful in its way as any of the mighty modern ships that now dash across the Atlantic. And when we read of such monuments as the marvellous pyramid of Gizeh, 486 feet high, in which are great stones whose estimated weight is not less than 880 tons each, we cannot but think that our vaunted civilisation may not be such a long way ahead of that of the ancients after all. Also, when we remember that thousands of years ago, in the earliest known experiences of mankind, there were vast libraries of books, we are not overawed much when the ridiculous evolutionist tells us that ours is the most advanced civilisation the world has known.

Modern Civilisation.

God help us! After all, what has all our wonderful progress in material things done for us? We have our quick railway trains, powerful motor cars, great steamships, mighty battleships, huge commercial buildings, and many wonderful scientific novelties, but has the sum total of human happiness, in any sense, been increased? Are we

happier or more content than were our fathers in their now despised age? When we look around us, and consider the fast accumulating evidences of a universal sorrow, we are constrained to recognise that, so far as the best things are concerned, our wonderful twentieth century civilisation is really a sad failure. Life for multitudes to-day is only a grim tragedy. Long after one of England's queens had passed away, there could be seen, scratched on the window-pane of her palace, "My Prison." It is tremendously evident that this is all that life is for many to-day. From one angle, a great city, like New York, for example, is really a mighty prison for many.

Things As They Are.

What is indeed the condition of the world as it finds record in our daily newspapers? How dreadful is the story provided for us every morning of broken marriage vows, wretched homes, ruined lives! Sordid crime, degrading sin, appalling misery, fearful distress of individual and nation, is the daily account of the world's life, as it is given us by the newspaper. These things supply the news of the day—every day—with but little variation. This is the record of the lives, not only of those who are called slum dwellers, but also of those who occupy the great modern mansions of the rich. The wealthy and the successful of our generation are supposed to profit most from the mighty advantages of our highly civilised generation. Certainly money can make available utilities that poverty can never hope to achieve. But, satisfaction of life is not coming in this way. Everything rather goes to show, that among those best able to take advantage of all the wonderful facilities, now available, in regard to comfort, pleasure, travel, amusement, and all the other things, that the scientific progress of our generation has made possible, is not in any sense to be found the happiness and the goodness that might be expected. Perhaps, in proportion, more crime of some awful character happens among the rich than among the poor. Certainly, fearful crimes are now taking place, everywhere. Jealousy, fast living, and vice are destroying the peace and true joy of life for multitudes. After all, real happiness is never to be bought with money.

The Strain of Life is Now Immense.

People are dying suddenly every day. Never before has there ever been such a proportion of sudden deaths. The chariots that rage in the streets, and that run like the lightnings, and that jostle each other, even in the broadways, and many other such conditions of our modern living, really have a tremendous effect upon the human heart. The thrill of fear is now more in the daily experience than ever before. As the Lord said would be, in the last days, men's hearts are surely failing them through fear. Also, the nerve-rack is terrific!

Another distressing result, in regard to the amazing civilisation that is now ours, is the phenomenal increase in regard to insanity. The huge establishments set up for the housing of the mentally afflicted are all the time having to be made larger still. America is probably the country advantaged most by modern scientific progress. There, in fifty years, the number of insane has doubled, so that now there is said to be one person thus afflicted out of just a little over every two hundred. In Britain, while in sixty years the population has increased by 87 per cent., the increase in the number of the insane has been 276 per cent. It is like that all through the world's life now. So that, if the same rate continues, it may not be so very long before there will be more insane than sane people in the world.

And, also, the number of suicides increases all the time in a fearful way. In many countries, the increasing number even of children and young people, generally, who are cutting short their days, is really appalling.

And, oh! could I here dare speak of the fearful, widespread sin in relation to the laws of sex, and the fearful black plague that has come upon the human race as a consequence. Draw near and listen to one of our own great authorities, Sir Charles Mackellar, M.L.C.: "Leprosy, tuberculosis, alcoholism, and venereal diseases have been described as the great plagues of modern society, and by far the greatest is the one I have named last." Those night clinics in our great cities are outstanding signs of the failure of our vaunted civilisation. Those vast encampments of diseased men suggest a veritable nightmare of human misery.

Then, also, what hopeless social unrest prevails everywhere in the world! The internal, political circumstances of all the nations are rapidly approaching the impossible.

What Then is the Cause?

The cause is legion for number. Sin, fast living, worry, anxiety, spiritualism, and other such like extravagances of our modern life are all among the contributing factors of present world agony. The appalling and general departure from God and Divine Truth is surely the primary cause.

Without God, Without Hope.

Death, destruction, despair! This awful trinity of human horror cries out to us in loud warning that all civilisation, no matter its material advantages, without God, must end in failure. That is it! And it is that which lies behind all the disappointment and behind all the tragedy of human life. It is the world's neglect of God. As the conditions of existence have become easier, men everywhere have drifted from God and from true religion. Indeed, God does not seem to be needed by a humanity that has felt itself to be a rising one, with things improving all the time. Not rising and evolving into a better life, as the philosophers have madly claimed, but falling all the time, as God's Word declares, and the facts of experience show the true condition of our race to be.

Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Not reformation, but regeneration, is the need of a lost humanity. But, the great God foresaw it all from the beginning. This scientific age, about which we are so proud, is really the final test of humanity.

In the sweat of his face man formerly had to win bread to satisfy the needs of a body that was to return to dust. But, in these last days, God has really been giving a new opportunity to mankind, by making the conditions of life easier. But this last opportunity is failing—tragically failing, like everything else wherein God, at other times, has tried man.

What is there left to us? What do we now look for? The coming of the Lord Himself. Oh, how near the event must now be! For what are you, my reader, looking for-

ward? How is it all going to end for you? Listen! For some, there is nothing but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. Are you among these? The others are looking for the blessed Hope and the glorious appearing of the Great God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ. I plead with you to join with them. Enter in amongst them through faith in the atoning death of Jesus Christ, and you will surely find the unspeakable peace, which no merely human civilisation can ever give. Eternal salvation is a gift from God, through Christ. You have only to receive. With the heart man believeth unto righteousness. With the mouth confession is made unto salvation. Do get right with God, now! The matter is truly urgent.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Sign of the Jew.

Rom., xi., 1, 25.

"Hath God cast away His people?

"God hath not cast away His people.

"For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery . . . that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.

"And so all Israel shall be saved.

"There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob; for this is my covenant to them."

"Hath God cast away His people?" God's people here referred to, are Jacob's descendants, the Jews! That now is what they are called.

Than the Jew there is no more interesting personality in the world. Those with the eye to see, know very well, that the Jew is right at the centre of all the strange conditions into which this old world has recently entered. Exiled from their own land, and scattered far among other nations, the Jewish people have ever dwelt quite apart and distinct from all others, and none have suffered greater hardship and more awful persecution than have they.

A Perplexing Personality.

Regarding the Jew's presence in the world, great thinkers have really been very much perplexed. The French philosopher, Renan, wrote: "The philosophy of history fails utterly to account for the Jew." The German, Hegel, confessed that, like a dark enigma, the history of the Jew had tormented him all his life. Charles Lamb also declared that, "The Jews are a piece of stubborn antiquity, compared with

which Stonehenge is in its nonage." Israel Zangwill, a Jew himself, said that: "The history of his people is like reading a romance of perilous adventure written in the first person. Again and again the hero may be divided from death by a hair's breadth, yet we know he will always come through safely, since is he not narrating? During the thirty centuries or so of his national existence he has been perpetually stumbling on the verge of the abyss of annihilation, yet always has he recovered his footing, and why? Only because of the Divine preservation."

It was of the Jew, also, Mark Twain wrote, when he said: "He could be vain of himself and be excused for it. The Egyptian, Babylonian, and the Persian rose, filled the planet with sound and splendor, then faded to dream-stuff and passed away; the Greek and Roman followed, and made a vast noise, and they are gone; other people have sprung up and held the torch high for a time; but it burned out, and they sit in the twilight or have vanished. The Jew saw them all, beat them all, and is now what he always was, exhibiting no decadence, no infirmities of age, no weakening of his parts, no slowing of his energies, no dulling of his alert and aggressive mind. All things are mortal but the Jew; all other forces pass, but he remains. What is the secret of his immortality?"

A Wonderful Monument.

There certainly has been no more unique fragment of antiquity come down to us from the far distant past than the Jewish people. Among all the monuments, and other remarkable things unearthed in ancient lands, during our wonderful age of research and discovery, no more interesting relic, whose history can be more easily understood, remains to us. When we consider the strange story of, and consider the position held by this unique people among the nations, and everything now happening in regard to them, we are filled with a solemn wonder. They have certainly been miraculously preserved for some special purpose in connection with the future development of the human race. When Frederick the Great said to his chaplain one day at table, "Give me an evidence of Christianity in a word," the ready reply was, "The Jew." No wonder this infidel king after-

wards wrote to the governor of one of his provinces: "Let those Jews alone; no man ever touched them and prospered."

Part of the mystery that relates to the Jew is the fact that while he is acclimated in every land, his distinct identity continues. At the best, only tolerated wherever he settled, yet the Jew now has come to be a mighty world influence. Concerning his people, Lord Beaconsfield, also a Jew, wrote: "The attempt to extirpate them has been made under the most favorable auspices, and on the largest scale, and for the longest period of time. Egyptian Pharaohs, Assyrian Kings, Roman Emperors, Scandinavian Crusaders, Gothic Princes, and Holy Inquisitors have alike devoted their energies to the fulfilment of this common purpose. Expatriation, exile, captivity, confiscation, torture on the most ingenious and massacre on the most extensive scale have been tried in vain. Jews are to-day probably more numerous than in the days of Solomon. They are found in all lands, and prospering in most; taking leading positions in every sphere of life: in commerce and politics, as well as in literature and art."

The Jew remains; his enemies perish. The torture devised for him has invariably recoiled upon his torturers. Said the inspired Hebrew writer: "They have digged a pit before me; they are fallen into the midst thereof themselves." Jew-persecuting empires like Babylon, Greece, and Rome are no more; while in the present world upheaval the nations nearest extinction are those that have been most bitter to the Jew. In that connection another writer says: "The Jews, braving all kinds of torments, the pangs of death, and the still more terrible pangs of life, have withstood the most awful persecutions. Yet mighty nations whose power embraced the whole inhabited world have vanished; whilst the little handful of scattered, subjugated and humbled folk still flourishes after the organised and world-wide persecution of eighteen centuries; preserving their laws and customs given them in the infancy of the world, and preserving their unique nationality amid the changes of centuries."

Remarkable.

In world affairs now the Jew is really a startling personality. When Daniel O'Connell sneered at Disraeli for being a Jew the reply was: "The gentleman's scorn does not

trouble me, when I remember that half the Christian world worships a Jew, and the other half a Jewess."

And here is a fact that can never be gainsaid. It is that, while in all the pages of secular history the Jew stands right out in clearest distinction, yet is it to the Bible we must go, if we are going to have the least understanding, in regard to his mysterious personality. And in the doing of that we shall also surely come to perceive the connection of the Jew with the entirely new world situation that so recently has arisen.

And there is no man who studies the history of this nation, as it is given in the inspired records, who can possibly continue an infidel. For if no people have had such a history, certainly no people have had such historians. For one thousand years Divinely-inspired pens kept their records; therefore, for the world, is preserved an absolutely reliable narrative of events. We not only have trustworthy evidence for the correctness of what the Bible says about the past history of the Jewish people, but we also see now happening before our eyes the things so long ago prophesied concerning them. What has happened, since Christ's time, to the Jews was long before foretold of them by inspired prophets. And as a necessary setting to our understanding of the things that are now happening in relation to this people, and also in regard to the signs of the Lord's return, I must first ask you to consider the past history of this wonderful people. We have all of this in the Bible in a wonderful amplitude of detail.

Their Past History.

The story really begins with Abraham. "Now, the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee; and I will make of thee a great nation." (Gen., xii., 1.)

This was the first promise to Abraham that of his seed would come to be a great nation. Now whether we recognise or not that this promise has had any measure of fulfilment in the past, it must be true that this people have certainly yet to become a great nation, and a blessing to the whole earth, for God has said it. Then we are told how the land became theirs. No other nation in all history

has had such wonderful title deeds for the land they hold. Other peoples may have claimed the land they occupy through right of conquest, but the land of Israel belongs to Israel, because it is God's gift to them. The title deed is clear from the beginning: "Lift up now thine eyes and look from the place where thou art, northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward; for all the land which thou seest to thee will I give it, AND TO THY SEED FOR EVER." (Gen., xiii., 14.)

The actual boundaries of the land, thus given to Abraham and to his seed for ever, are also as clearly defined. There can be no real dispute at any time as to its extent. The Lord made a covenant with Abraham, saying, "Unto thy seed I give this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates." (Gen., xv., 18.) Abraham's seed have never yet been in possession of all this immense territory. When they entered first into the land, they failed to possess all that had been given them. Nevertheless it remains true for ever. This wide extent of country must be theirs, for God gave it to them, as an everlasting possession.

Travellers in Palestine have always wondered at the narrow strip of country this people held, even at the greatest period of their past history. And until recently, some Jews, hitherto opposed to the Zionist movement, held that the land was too circumscribed to hold all the Jews now in the world, if they wanted to return as a nation. Of course, this objection was based on the assumption that only the narrow strip of country, once held by this people, is all that belongs to them. But an examination of the Divine title deed shows the land given by the Great God to Abraham's seed is sufficient to hold them, when that seed will have become as the sand of the seashore for number.

The simple fact is, that the Creator, out of the thirty-two thousand six hundred and forty million acres that comprise the land surface of the earth, reserved for Himself one hundred and ninety-two million acres, or 300,000 square miles—that is, an area twelve and a half times as large as Great Britain and Ireland, together. This area can certainly be spoken of as God's own land; but, as we have seen, God deeded it over for ever to be in the permanent possession of

the seed of Abraham. He for ever forbade the land to be sold. This you will see if you look up Leviticus xxv., 23: "The land shall not be sold for ever, for the land is mine."

The great extent of this land is said to be unsurpassed in climate, soil, production, and natural advantage, and is certainly capable of holding an immense population. But it has never yet been occupied by the people to whom God gave it. But it must be theirs now, as much as if they were in actual possession. For the terms under which the grant was conferred on them by God still hold good. "I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession." (Gen., xvii., 8.)

But though God gave this great land as an everlasting possession for the descendants of Abraham, He well knew that, because of their continued sinning against the revealed law of righteousness, there would be a long time, during which they would have to be scattered and sifted among the nations, and even long centuries before, God showed what would happen to them and to the land during that period.

The Reason Why.

There was clear and specific reason for the Divine choice in regard to this people. It was not that they were different in other peoples. The explanation of God in that regard is now before us. "For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God; the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto Himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. The Lord did not set His love upon you, nor choose you, because you were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people; but because the Lord loved you, and because He would keep the oath He had sworn unto your fathers." (Deut., 7, 6, 7.)

In regard to this choice, the Divine purpose has clearest expression. Through Abram's seed the whole world was to be brought into the blessing of God. The kingdom of Heaven was to come to earth. But it was only through a holy people that it could ever be possible. And if the descendants of Abram would only observe and do the commandments and the statutes of God, every possible blessing

would come upon them. "The Lord shall command the blessing upon thee in thy storehouses, and in all that thou settest thine hand unto; and He shall bless thee in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee."

For disobedience and failure, very great was to be the judgment that would come. "And it shall come to pass, that as the Lord rejoiced over you to do you good, and to multiply you, so the Lord will rejoice over you to destroy you, and to bring you to naught; and ye shall be plucked from off the land whither thou goest to possess it. And the Lord shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth to the other . . . And among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest; but the Lord shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind; and thy life shall hang in doubt before thee; and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life: in the morning thou shalt say, Would God it were even! And at even thou shalt say, Would God it were morning! for the fear of thine heart wherewith thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see." (Deut., 28, 63.)

And the people of Israel

Always Failed God.

The Divine Creator had given them the most perfect set of laws possible, in regard to all the circumstances of their lives. There was no need for them to have men legislate for them. The righteous administration of the laws that had come to them from Heaven was all Israel ever needed.

But, they wearied of the government of Heaven, and desired to be given a king of flesh and blood like the nations around them. In His anger God gave them Saul and afterwards took him away in His wrath. Then God gave them David, and rapidly they became a great nation, and which reached its greatest past glory in the time of David's son, Solomon. Ten of the tribes revolted from the rule of Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, and established themselves in Samaria, as the northern kingdom, where they set up images and became an exceedingly idolatrous people. The Assyrians were ultimately raised up by God against the people of the ten tribes, and they were carried away into captivity. The other kingdom continued on for another 120 years, when,

because of increasing wickedness, the king of Babylon, under God, came and broke up this kingdom of Judah, the people of which were also carried off as captives. At the end of seventy years, as was foretold by Jeremiah, the people of all the tribes, willing to go back, were permitted to return, and those who did, rebuilded Jerusalem and the temple, which then became the national centre of all the returned people, as also it did for those who remained in far away lands.

But, they had no king of their own any more. For concerning them, through Ezekiel, the prophet, God had said, in regard to the diadem and the crown of the nation: "I will overturn, overturn, overturn it: and it shall be no more, until He come whose right it is; and I will give it Him." (Ezek., 21, 27.) So that British-Israel people are bearing false witness, when they affirm, as they do, that the British King now wears that crown. That crown belongs to God's Christ, concerning whom it is said, that: "He shall sit upon the throne of David His father, and He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever." His right it only is to have the crown, and to Him it surely will be given, in the great crowning day that is coming.

Until the first advent of our Redeemer Lord, the returned Jews were ruled, by one conqueror after another, until the imperial eagle of mighty Rome flew on the Tower of David, on the hill of Zion.

A New Opportunity.

In the fulness of time, the Son of God came. Out of the East emerged those mysterious wise men, seeking Him who was born King of the Jews. To the lost sheep of the house of Israel was then presented the Divine Messiah.

We never can forget, that it was for this purpose first, Christ came into the world. This we see in the very first words of the Gospel of Matthew: "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham." Just think what this connection of the Babe of Bethlehem, with Abraham, through David, suggested! To sit on David's throne He was born. To Mary was proclaimed the wonderful fact, as already stated, "Thou shalt call His name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His

father, David; and He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end." (Luke, i., 31.) What throne does God say our Lord is to sit on? The throne of David. What people will He reign over? Over the house of Jacob. Has He ever done this? Never, yet. Then all of this will have to be realised some day. Surely my reader will recognise that, if God has declared that Jesus Christ is to sit on David's throne, and reign over the house of Jacob for ever, this must absolutely happen, for the Word of the Great God cannot be broken.

Said the Roman Governor to the despised Christ, at Pilate's judgment-bar, "Art thou a king, then?" Let us crowd round close that we may catch every word of the answer. "Thou sayest truly that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world." Yes, He was born to be a king, King of the Jews, to sit on the throne of His father David, and to reign over the house of Jacob for ever. Thus it was that when He was born, the wise men came from the east, saying, "Where is He that is born King of the Jews?" And when the time was ripe, the forerunner, John the Baptist, went forth with the distinct message to the Jewish nation: "Repent, for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand." The same message, to the same people, is proclaimed by the Lord at the commencement of His ministry: "Repent, for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand."

Now you can understand our Lord when he said, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." You cannot forget that it was to His own people our Lord's earthly work was entirely confined. In His first commission to the twelve Apostles, He strictly charged them, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not; but go, rather, to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of Heaven is at hand." It was also because He claimed to be their king, with the right to sit on the throne of David, that the Jews demanded His crucifixion. When He hung on the cross, the leaders of the people gathered round and taunted Him with the folly of His claim, saying, "If He be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe Him." Over His thorn-crowned

head were written the startling words in the languages of the three leading world peoples, Hebrew, Greek, and Latin: "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." His mission had been to the Jews, living then, within the coasts of the Land of Israel. They were the lost sheep of the house of Israel. "He came unto His own, but His own received Him not." "O, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which art sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see Me henceforth till ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." (Matt. xxiii., 37-39.)

What pathos is here! These terrible words express the broken heart of the rejected Christ. Yet is there a wonderful fact therein revealed. It is this. Those who then rejected the Divine King are not to be for ever cast away. Neither is their land to be everlastingly in the power of alien peoples. This thing was made quite clear in what the Lord said unto the Jews, who were then rejecting Him. It was this He said of them: "They shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, UNTIL THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES BE FULFILLED." (Luke, 21, 24.)

It is also precisely the same thing is implied in what the Apostle Paul had to say concerning his brethren of Israel: "Hath God cast away His people?" "God hath not cast away His people." "For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part has happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob."

Therein, is the purpose of God made clear. When Christ came the sons of Jacob had again rejected the will of God for them. And they also, for the time being, would become reject from their land and from the purpose of God. For a long interval, alien feet would tread down Jerusalem, as well as the whole of the Divinely covenant land.

An Illuminating Illustration.

I came across it the other day. The Jews had crucified their Lord. Paul would have us know that it was through crass, blind ignorance they had done it. "Had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory." (1 Cor., 2, 8.)

In olden time, when an Israelite was cutting wood, and his axe, slipping from the helve, happened to kill his neighbor, he was forced to flee along the specially prepared highway to the nearest city of refuge. This had to be done because the nearest of kin to the slain man had to act at once as the avenger of blood, go after the fleeing man, overtake him, if possible, slay him, and by doing it, obtain satisfaction for the deed, according to the law set up by God, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed."

So that, though it was by an unintentional act the deed had been done, the manslayer, at least, lost his home, and if the city of refuge was reached in safety, he must stay there, till one high priest died and another came. In this, as in all sacred Scripture, there is a deep and wonderful analogy. Like the manslayer, the Jews ignorantly slew their Messiah. Yet, though in ignorance the deed was done, the doom of the manslayer came upon them. They lost their home. They had expelled our Lord from the home that was His, they also became expelled from their land. For many a long century, they could not return to it. During the long period of absence from it, the rejected Christ has, in Heaven, been filling the office of Great High Priest, while the Jews, away from their own land, have had neither priest nor king. This also is in accord with the prophetic Message regarding them, "For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim: afterwards shall the children of Israel return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king; and shall fear the Lord and His goodness in the latter days." (Hos., 3, 4.)

You see, the prophecy is, that after many days of being without king and priest, the Jews are to return to God and to their King, and it is to be in the latter days, this reconciliation is to happen. It is at that time, the Scriptures

show, that our Blessed Lord will cease His office as Priest, to become King, and it is then, as a nation, Israel will have the full right of return to their own land, and the great David's Greater Son, their King.

In the Meanwhile, Suffering.

The Divine judgment for the Jews had been clearly stated.

"The Lord shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth to the other."

"Among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest."

"Thy life shall hang in doubt before thee."

"Thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life." "In the morning thou shalt say, Would God it were even! and at even thou shalt say, Would God it were morning! for the fear of thine heart, wherewith thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see."

"There shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations."

"Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled."

Forty years after the Jews rejected Christ, the Romans took the city of Jerusalem after a siege in which it is said hundreds of thousands perished. Those left alive were carried away, and a ploughshare was drawn over the Hill of Zion, as a witness that it ceased to be a city, for the prophet of God had clearly foretold that Jerusalem would become as a ploughed field. Having exiled their own Messiah, the Jews themselves became exiles among all nations, where their history of the past two thousand years has been written in blood and tears.

In the second century, some of the Jews were permitted to return to the land, but they soon revolted. They were quickly overpowered by Hadrian, and according to Jewish writers, the Roman soldiers waded to their bridles in blood, and the bodies of the slain extended for thirteen miles from the fortress of Bether—580,000 perished then, and 985 towns and villages were laid in ashes, and the whole of Judea

turned into a desert. The Emperor Hadrian certainly attempted to obliterate the very existence of Jerusalem from the earth. The ground on which the temple had stood was ploughed up, and a heathen edifice to Jupiter was erected on the same spot, the name of the city was changed, and Jews were forbidden to enter it under penalty of death.

Since then the horrors they have suffered no pen can describe. Five times over they have been almost entirely annihilated, but on each occasion have they been rescued by God, through human agency. Weary and footsore, they have wandered over the earth, finding no place to rest, not even to die. And, strange as it may seem, it is from so-called Christian nations they have suffered the most. The heathen and Mahommedan peoples have treated more kindly the despised house of Jacob than did those who professed to worship Him, Who was born a Jew.

Until recently, the Jews have been the butt, the jibe, the mockery, the scorn and the contempt of the world. And, as was said, by my friend, Dr. I. M. Haldeman, of New York:

"They have been more than laughed at, more than mocked. They have been the objects of a persecution unparalleled. They have been whipped, beaten with rods, stoned, imprisoned, robbed, and burned alive. The men have been enslaved, the women ruthlessly ravished, and the children destroyed. They have been thrown into wells, sent to sea in rotten ships, flayed alive, tortured, hunted as wild beasts are hunted, and their lives prolonged in agony till death has become a benediction. For centuries whoever robbed or killed a Jew felt that he did God service. They were not allowed to own a rood of land, nor testify in court, and, in some places, were charged the toll weight over a bridge as though they had been a herd of cattle or a flock of sheep. Because they had no recourse: because all men were their enemies, and every hand against them, their character responded to the times and its usage. Unable to defend themselves with arms, they seemed to fawn, to yield, took advantage of their foes, cheated when they could, and lied themselves out of threatened danger. These were their only weapons of defence, and when caught in the attempt to so defend themselves against the assaults of their Gentile aggressors, they were smitten and persecuted a thousand

fold—each characteristic of apparent duplicity justifying the Gentile in his murderous attack.

"God used the Gentile nations as His rods wherewith to correct His disobedient people; at the same time, He warned these nations that while He would not make a full end of the Jews, He would make a full end of them."

And the history of all the nations, from Babylon down, who have thus dealt with the sore-footed Jews has indeed been a terrific commentary in regard to the Divine warning.

During the middle ages, in Germany, thousands upon thousands were tortured and put to death for no crime whatever except their Jewish blood; many of them set fire to their own synagogues, and perished in the flames; wives and virgins often threw themselves into the rivers to escape a worse fate at the hands of beastly soldiers.

In France, in whole provinces, every Jew was burned. At Chinois a deep ditch was dug, an enormous pile raised, and 160 of both sexes buried together.

It is said that some of the fleeing Jews obtained shelter in Portugal on payment of a heavy fine, but even then secret orders went forth from the throne to seize the children under fourteen years of age; and many Jewish mothers threw their darlings into wells and rivers, to keep them from the grip of their relentless persecutors.

In 1495 King Manoel came to the throne of Portugal. At first he was favorably inclined towards his Jewish subjects; but, unfortunately for them, he entered into negotiations for a marriage with the Infanta Isabella, a princess of Spain. The Spanish Court would listen to the proposal only on two conditions—firstly, that he must break off friendly relationships with the Court of France, and, secondly, that he must banish all the Jews out of his kingdom. Though these proposals were repugnant to Manoel, yet so deeply enamored was he with the Infanta that he weakly yielded. This Isabella even excelled her own mother in cruel bigotry. So that, when King Manoel was at last expecting his bride to cross the borders of his country, he received a letter from her saying that she would never set foot in Portugal until the land had been cleansed from those "curse-laden Jews." The marriage contract was sealed in the misery of the Jewish

people, for then followed dreadful happenings—multitudes being massacred in the most heartless fashion.

At the hands of Russia, the Jews have suffered most and longest. How often has old mother earth been drenched with the blood of these, the brethren of our Lord, according to the flesh! As late as the years 1881 and even 1905, when the Greek and Roman Churches were keeping their Easter in Russia, over 100,000 Jews were massacred. And even in the years that have followed the close of the Great War, pogroms have happened in north-eastern Europe in which many unfortunate Jews have been slain.

In England as well, the Jews had to go through much suffering, the mildest phase of which, perhaps, found expression in the law enacted during the reign of Edward I.:

(1) That no Jew should come to or depart from England, without license, on pain of death.

(2) That no Jew should walk or ride without a yellow badge upon his outward garment, on pain of death.

(3) That no Jew should stir out of his house on Good Friday.

(4) That no Jew should strike a Christian, on pain of having his right hand cut off.

(5) That all Jewish synagogues should be suppressed, and any Rabbi teaching or preaching against the Christian religion should be burnt.

(6) That all Jewish children, as soon as they are born, must be taken from their parents and put in charge of the rector or vicar of the parish and brought up in the Christian religion; the Jews, however, to pay all charges.

(7) That if any Jew become a Christian all his usurious acquisitions shall be converted to pious uses.

It is also written that many Bishops of the Church of England decreed that no Jew could enter a Christian Church. And when a debauched nobleman wished to escape the payment of a debt he owed them, the cheapest and easiest way was to assassinate the creditor. It is said that 500 Jews, besieged in the Castle of York by Christian knights, first destroyed everything of value to them, killed their wives and children, and then themselves rather than surrender to the tender mercies of these chivalrous knights who fought under the banner of the Cross.

Their Presence a Miracle.

But, notwithstanding all of such agelong suffering the Jews remain in the world to-day a tremendous monument as to the truth of God's Word. The existence of this people, indeed, is the miracle of history. In the time of Christ it is estimated that there were four million Jews. In the middle ages, through fierce persecutions, their numbers were reduced to one million. But now, notwithstanding all that has happened to them, there are said to be about twenty million Jews in the world, and they are successful over all others in every walk of life. The Jew is certainly now a dominant influence, which certainly is greater than the number of him would ordinarily warrant.

World finance is now distinctly his peculiar function. The handling of gold, silver, and precious stones is his special business. His influence in commerce is regal, and in all professions he is pre-eminent. Even in the great revolutionary movement now shaking the world, the Jew is seen to be leading. They were Jews, like Karl Marx and Ferdinand Lassalle, who created the philosophy behind the mighty communistic scheme of things, now gripping the world.

Prof. Hosmer writes: "There are no lands in which the Jews form a large element of the population but for some reason an astonishing change from the old abasement is to be noticed in the position they have come to occupy. The mediaeval outcast is everywhere climbing into places of power, until it begins to seem possible that he may obtain an ascendency as remarkable as his past abjectness." It is really fear of his mysteriously growing power throughout the world that is surely going to bring to the modern Jew distinct hardship and ultimate suffering. General Trepoff, a Russian, said to Mr. Hyndman, a Socialist: "If we give the Jews the freedom you ask for them, in six months they would be masters of Russia." The irony now is that in Russia, even the Jew could not be kept down. First Kerensky, then Trotsky, with other Bolshevik Jews, have really come to be the real masters of Soviet Russia.

The Jew's Land.

It is an astonishing thing. In the centuries, during which the Jew was going through his long nightmare of suf-

fering in faraway countries, his own land was lying desolate, with but the scantiest of population.

For century after century, unique conditions had made for the land of Israel a perpetual Sabbath. Through hundreds of years, this country has been held by the only nation that could ever have kept it in such perpetual desolation. If a Christian nation had possessed Palestine, its condition would surely have been very different. The mightiest of the professed Christian nations have hungered for it, and frequently sought by might of arms to obtain possession, but all have hitherto strangely failed. But the time now has come when it has passed for ever from the grip of the desolating Turk, a grip which had been ruthlessly maintained for more than twelve long centuries. But since the Great War ended, Palestine has passed right out from Mahommedan power. That long, dark page of human history is now eternally ended.

What has happened then? Into whose care has this long-coveted and most wonderful country passed? The question is now very important indeed. It suggests the real crux of all human history and indicates the beginning of the end. The knowledge of what the question holds should really make our souls thrill with a holy joy. For because of all that has already happened, the time may not now be far off, when Christ will call away His Church, His redeemed people, to meet Him in the Heavens. Do you not see the startling meaning of all that has already happened, since the close of the Great War, in regard to the land of Israel? The Divine Prophecies had most precisely indicated how that the Merchant Nation of Tarshish—Great Britain—would come to assume the beneficent control of the long desolate land, not for any possible national advantage to be gained thereby, but chiefly to enable the long scattered sons of Israel to be restored once again to their own land. That only, all through, has been the distinctly avowed intention of the British Government in accepting Mandate over Palestine. Mr. Balfour's historic letter, written during the War, made the matter quite clear.

"His Majesty's Government view with favor the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavors to facilitate the

achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country."

That the foregoing letter was not a mere expression of pious sentiment on the part of the British Government was evident; for, shortly afterwards, it was authoritatively announced in all the leading newspapers:

"The Government has authorised the Zionist Organisation to appoint a Commission to investigate the present condition of the Jewish Colonies in Palestine. Among its objects will be the repatriation of the Jewish inhabitants who have been compelled by the enemy to leave Palestine, the Organisation of relief work, and the reopening of Jewish institutions in the Holy Land which have been closed owing to enemy action, and to restore the damage which the enemy has inflicted on the Jewish Colonies."

The sons of Israel had to be returned to their own land, again, and the ships of Tarshish had to be the first to help them back. (Isaiah, 60, 9.)

Transformed Conditions.

The Jews' own land is Palestine, surely the most fascinating in all the earth. It was once said to flow with milk and honey, but for long centuries it has been just a dreary waste. Travellers over its bleak hills have wondered how the Bible description of it could ever have been true. Yet experts show there is no more fertile land anywhere. Brun says of Galilee: "It would be a Paradise were it inhabited by an industrious people under an enlightened government." Dr. Clarke reports that "Twelve inches beneath the surface is a splendid dark soil. The natural fertility of these immense plains cannot be overestimated. Lying fallow year by year, from age to age, the soil has become exceedingly rich and only requires cultivation to become one of the most fruitful and verdant spots on the earth." Recently, on a farm near Bethlehem, a rotation of five different crops was obtained in one year. Yet this land, said to be unsurpassed in climate, soil, production and natural advantages, was kept in perpetual desolation alone through the misgovernment of another nation, while its rightful owners have been home-

less wanderers throughout the earth. Turkish misrule and marauding Arabs kept Palestine the waste it has so long been.

Strange Things.

For 1700 years the Roman edict forbidding Jews a home in their own land held good. So that when Sir Moses Montifiore visited Palestine in 1827 only about 500 very poor Jews could be found from Dan to Beersheba. Until 1896 no one ever thought possible, Jewish national restoration to Palestine. But in that year was held the first Zionist Convention, at which Theodore Herzl roused all Jewry with the proposal for a Jewish State. But until 1914, when the Great War began, scanty progress had been made towards Jewish restoration, though the 500 Jewish residents of Montifiore's day had come to be about 100,000. Then, in November, 1917, came the pronouncement by the British Government favoring the establishment of a national home for the Jewish people in Palestine. A month later Jerusalem surrendered to General Allenby. Not long after, the whole of Palestine was taken from the Turks, and twelve months from the Balfour declaration the Great War was over.

Then the Conference of Allied Premiers at San Remo, on April 24, 1920, decided to grant Great Britain the mandate over Palestine, and to the Jews of the world the right and liberty to rebuild their national home in Palestine. The Council of the League of Nations in 1922 confirmed the mandate, making Britain responsible for such "economic conditions as will secure the establishment of the Jewish national home, as laid down in the preamble." But the strangest feature is here. The British Government, through its Commissioner, Sir Herbert Samuel, gave every consideration to the Arabs, the largest section of Palestine's population. Three times over these were offered the privilege of having representative government. But they persistently refused the offer. Consequently the authorities are now actually compelled to facilitate more rapid settlement of Jews in the land. Thus more than double the number that returned in Nehemiah's days are now there. The ancient Hebrew flag flies again over the Tower of David, and the Jewish Sanhedrin, that nineteen centuries ago condemned

Christ to Calvary, functions once more at Jerusalem. By order of the Chief Rabbi, after nineteen centuries, the Shofar (Ram's horn), indicating the arrival of the hour of national redemption, has actually been blown. And at Jerusalem about nine-tenths of the entire business is already in Jewish hands, while the whole land is being transformed by Jewish agricultural, religious zealots.

The Sign.

What then does it all mean? In the clear light, of Divine Prophecy, the remarkable change in regard to universal Jewish condition, which recently has come about, and the equally amazing rejuvenation of the Jew's ancient land, can only mean one thing. Which is, that the return of the Lord Jesus Christ to this old world is now very near. Our Lord Himself indicated clearly, that the restoration of the Jew was to be looked upon as the chief sign in regard to the nearness of the mighty event. The fig tree is the distinct Divine symbol in regard to Jewish experience. The fact is specially seen in the Gospels.

"He spake also this parable: A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none. Then said he unto the dresser of the vineyard, Behold these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground? And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it: and if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down." (Luke, 13: 6, 9.)

In that parable is the history of God's dealings with the favored nation. Israel was planted in the Lord's vineyard, but gave God no fruit. Then came the Divine Son to them. For three years, did He come seeking fruit, but there was none. Hanging on the cross He prayed the Father to forgive them for thus causing Him to die. Because of that prayer, was why it was not till forty years later, the Romans came and cut the fig tree nation down.

The disciples also were given a special lesson in regard to the fig tree nation. It was on the occasion of our Lord's last visit to Jerusalem seeking fruit, and finding none. "And on the morrow, when they were come from Bethany, He was

hungry. That was indeed a strange circumstance. Who lived at Bethany, where He was usually entertained on His visits to Jerusalem? Martha and Mary and Lazarus. Not any of these would ever have allowed their Divine Guest to leave their house in the morning, hungry. It was not for physical food Jesus Christ was hungry. It was for the fruit, the fig tree nation could have yielded to Him. And the disciples had to learn all about it. "He was hungry: and seeing a fig tree afar off having leaves, He came, if haply, He might find anything thereon: and when He came to it, He found nothing but leaves; for the time of figs was not yet. And Jesus answered and said unto it, No man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever." "And in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots."

What was it, was meant by this strange incident? Only one thing. The Lord would have His people to know that Israel was now rejected. For a whole age, no fruit unto God would come from the fig tree. As a nation their time of opportunity was gone, until the fulfilment of the time of the Gentiles. To the Jews, the words had been spoken. "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof."

This nation unto whom the kingdom of God has been given is something new. Never has such a nation ever before been. It comprises all people who have been redeemed unto God, by precious blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation. It was of such, the same apostle, who drew the Lord's attention to the withered up fig tree, afterwards said: "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people: that ye should show forth the praises of Him Who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light." (1 Pet., 2, 9.)

The Fig Tree Again to Bud.

It was that the Lord said will be. "Now learn a parable of the fig tree: When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: so likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that He is near, even at the doors." (Matt., 24, 32.)

That, then, is the condition now. It is precisely the same as symbolised in the "dry bone" vision given through

Ezekiel. The valley was filled with very dry bones. With a great noise, God caused the bones to come together, and sinews and flesh and skin came up upon them, so that the valley was filled with dead bodies. There was a pause then, and afterwards, the Spirit of life came into them, and they stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army.

What did God say of it all? Just this: "These bones are the whole house of Israel: behold they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts. Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God: Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, AND BRING YOU INTO THE LAND OF ISRAEL. And ye shall know that I am the Lord when I have opened your graves, and shall put my Spirit in you and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the Lord have spoken it and will perform it, saith the Lord." (Ezekiel, 37, 11, 14.)

An Old Jewish Legend

tells of two venerable Rabbis, musing among the ruins of Jerusalem, after its destruction. One laments, as he views the situation: "Alas! Alas! This is the end of all. Our beautiful city is no more, the holy temple is laid waste and our brethren are driven away!" The other is animated with hope, and has a brighter outlook, and replies cheerfully: "True, but let us learn from the verities of God's judgments the certainty of His mercies. He hath said, I will destroy, and we have seen that He has done it, but he has also said, I will rebuild Jerusalem, and shall we not believe Him?"

The Jewish position is now exactly as that in Ezekiel's vision. The Great War made the mightiest noise this world has ever known. Out from that awful cataclysm there has emerged, at least, the semblance of Jewis nationality. The flag of David has again been raised. One hundred and sixty thousand Jews have gone back, and are now rapidly developing the land. Great schemes are under way, to rapidly increase the number of returning ones. New cities are being established, while the old ones are being restored.

Tel-Aviv.

The city of Tel-Aviv is really a thrilling illustration of the new life that everywhere is in evidence throughout the

land. Where it stands, until recently, was desert sand. Then a few devout Jews came together to dedicate the new city. In the few short years since, a miracle has happened. On that desert site now stands a fine modern city of nearly fifty thousand inhabitants, all of them Jews. Here are concrete streets, electric light and power, factories of all sorts, beautiful boulevards, charming modern homes and right up-to-date hotels. Quite as fine cities are also springing up in other parts of the land. The Jew is everywhere. Millions of vine cuttings have been planted on the hills, and the Hebrew farmer is working the land along the most scientific lines.

The harbor at Haifa is being constructed so that large steamers may soon be able to moor alongside the quays. The Standard Oil Company intends using Haifa as a centre for oil distribution. This port is also to be made the terminus for the Mosul pipe line, so that it will surely become a very great oil distributing centre to all the nations. It is also claimed that Haifa will soon be the most important port in the Orient, and it is quite anticipated that soon a railway will be built connecting Haifa with Bagdad, so that it will then really be the most important station on the line to India. The Rutenberg concern is organising electric power and light, and irrigation as well, for the whole of the land.

A syndicate of Jewish capitalists, under the leadership of such men as Lord Alfred Mond, Lord Reading, and Edward de Rothschild, have secured the concession in regard to the Dead Sea, so that the extraction of its enormous mineral wealth will soon be an established fact. Billions of wealth are contained in these strange, mysterious waters. A heavy royalty is to be paid to the Palestine Government, the fertiliser products are to be supplied to the Palestine farmers at cost price, then after a few years of operation the syndicate guarantees handing over the entire plant and machinery to the Government. Millions of money from Jews everywhere are pouring into this land. Hebrew is again an official language of the people, the Sanhedrin has been resuscitated, and priests are being trained for temple worship and service. Jewish agricultural colonies everywhere dot the land.

The fig tree is surely in bud. Throughout Palestine, and everywhere among the millions of dispersed Jews, there are

many signs of life, but not yet is it life unto God. The condition of the nation, is precisely similar to that of the first stage, in Ezekiel's vision. The bones have come together, the sinews and the flesh have come upon them, and the skin also has come to make an appearance of nationhood. That is all. This is now the time of waiting. Something else seems now about to happen. It is the most wonderful thing that has ever been.

What Next?

It is the coming again of the Lord Jesus Christ from Heaven. "God hath not cast away His people Israel. The time of their complete restoration seems right at hand. The fulness of Gentile opportunity, in regard to the Gospel, is surely come in. The Sign of the Jew indicates the Lord's coming to be at hand.

It was regarding the Jew, the Lord said, "When ye shall see all these things, know ye that He is near, even at the doors." And He also said: "Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come." As well, did He say: "Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh."

CHAPTER IX.

The Sign of the Nations.

"And the Stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth." (Dan. 2, 35.)

"And in the days of these kings shall the God of Heaven set up a Kingdom, which shall never be destroyed." (Dan. 2, 44.)

These words should have careful consideration. For in them we have the actual Divine description of the final overthrow of all independent national rule in this world. So that when this, that is thus described, has happened, there will never again be a nation or kingdom, anywhere throughout the whole earth, that will not have come under the beneficent government of High Heaven. At last will have consummated the prayer, taught every true believer by the Lord Jesus Christ: "Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven." The Son of God never could have instructed His people in all generations to offer such a prayer had its answer not been likely, some day, of achievement. Why always say, "Thy Kingdom come," if the Kingdom of God is never at all coming to this earth? It was concerning the actual coming of that Kingdom, the Lord said: "When ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the Kingdom of God is nigh at hand." (Luke, 21, 31.)

Not Yet Come.

This Kingdom of God has not yet come. If it had already come, in any sense, why should we still pray that it may come? It is only indeed when certain things are sometime to be seen coming to pass that we are to know the Kingdom is near. Not till then! Therefore, the Kingdom is not now here. As King of kings and Lord of lords, our Saviour Jesus Christ is coming again, through the opened heavens. "Then shall He sit upon the Throne of

His glory." It is then the Kingdom will have come. Again, should it be said, not till then!

The Kingdom of God is not coming gradually and imperceptibly to this world. It is coming suddenly. The manner of its inauguration has the clearest possible description in the second chapter of Daniel. In other Scriptures, the account of what then is to happen is just as clearly given, but what is here before us now is altogether sufficient for us to know how the Kingdom, which the God of Heaven is to set up, is coming in.

The coming of the Kingdom of God to this world is to be as the smashing of a great stone. About nothing else have we more precise information.

"Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them in pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together like the chaff of the summer threshing floor; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth." (Dan., 2, 34.)

In this way we are not left to either theory or speculation as to the meaning of all that is to be understood from the quotation just given. "The stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth." The interpretation is as clear as anything. It is: "And in the days of these kings shall the God of Heaven set up a Kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the Kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever." Therefore our Lord must be coming back again.

It is a Kingdom the God of Heaven is going to set up, and there cannot be a kingdom without a king. So that the Kingdom of Heaven is to inaugurate in this world with the Coming of the King. And it is the Sign of the Nations, in regard to that mighty event, we now go on to consider. And we do this in order that we may know how really near at hand the wonderful thing now seems to be.

How Can We Know?

Only from the words, the Great God has caused to be written, for the understanding of His own dear people, can

we ever know. The book of Daniel gives the most perfect unfolding of human history the world has ever known. Other histories, no matter how excellent, are invariably marred by the imperfections of their writers. This one is perfect, and absolutely accurate. The writer, Daniel, was one of those holy men of God, concerning whom the New Testament affirms, that they: "Spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." So that the words Daniel wrote were the words he was moved of God to write. Indeed, it was only because of this, the book of Daniel ever came to be written. For everything therein recorded, in this unfolding history of the nations, was written before the circumstances described had actually happened. The whole book of Daniel is chiefly Prophecy, and Divine Prophecy is human history written beforehand. Therefore, only the Great God could cause the things of this book to be written. For it is alone He, Who knows the end of all things from the beginning. And that is perhaps why, in regard to the understanding of the great Divine purposes, among all the books of the Bible, we could least do without this one.

All past history, down to this last moment of time, has unfolded exactly as was foretold through Daniel. Indeed, so accurate has been the fulfilment of the prophecies, concerning such mighty empires as Babylonia, Persia, Greece and Rome, that so-called "Modernists" can only account for them by suggesting that they were written after the events described had actually occurred. That is an easy way for unbelief to account for the mighty miracle of Divine Prophecy, but it sure gives the lie to all sacred Scripture and brands the inspired writer as an impostor. Yet, here indeed is a very remarkable circumstance. It not only is past history, down to the days when Jesus Christ appeared among men, that has unfolded according to the sayings of this wonderful book, but the startling conditions of our own time are just as definitely portrayed. Thus it is, in regard to the coming again of our Lord, we now have the Sign of the Nations.

The Dream of History.

In order that the wonder of it may be realised, we shall first have before us the occasion and circumstance of the dream. It was at the time of the final rejection and scattering of the remnant of the nation of Israel, and the conse-

quent handing over to the Gentiles of wide world dominion. Of this nation, it had long before been written: "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel." (Deut., 32, 8.) This unique nation was to be a kind of repository for all Divine Truth throughout the earth. Through this people, the Redeemer was to come into the world. As kings and priests, ever witnessing for God, they would come to be at the head of all the nations. Through them was the kingdom of Heaven to reach out with its beneficent influence to all men everywhere. But the elect nation failed God, was ultimately rejected, and the people were carried away into captivity. They were given over of God into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon. For it was then, it was written, concerning this first of the great Gentile world rulers: "Now have I given all these lands into the hand of the king of Babylon, my servant; and the beasts of the field have I given him also to serve him. And all nations shall serve him." (Jer., 27, 6.) The first invasion of the covenant land, was in the year 606 B.C., but it was not until about 587 B.C. that the whole of the Jews were removed and the land left to silence and desolation. From that time, the government of Palestine was given over to the Gentiles, and under Gentile dominion this land has continued ever since. The long period thus included, was called by the Lord, "The Times of the Gentiles." But that this Gentile control over the Holy Land was not intended to be for ever, is quite evident from the words Christ spoke to His disciples, regarding Jerusalem, when He said that the city was to "be trodden down of the Gentiles until the Times of the Gentiles be fulfilled."

The British-Israel Theory.

There are those who claim that Britain's throne is the same as that of ancient Israel, and that England's Sovereign only reigns because he is in the true lineal descent from King David, with whom the Great God made an everlasting covenant in regard to his house, throne and kingdom. This is an astonishing delusion, for which there is not one particle of authoritative evidence. As a theory, it is exactly like the modern fallacy of Evolution, in that it entirely

rests on supposed resemblances and assumptions for which there is not the least tangible support. The British-Israel theory is not true. It cannot be true, because, God's word plainly shows, that the heirship to the throne of David, in the natural line, according to the flesh, has been for ever abolished. Jeconiah was the last king in the royal succession that ever sat on the throne of David. He only reigned one hundred days, and was then, on the Jewish New Year's Day, taken captive to Babylon. Five years later, the Glory of God departed from the Temple and from Jerusalem, and then finally departed from the Mount of Olives, which was situate to the east of the city. The wickedness of the covenant people had become enormous. And it was against this Jeconiah, the last of the true lineal heirs in the purpose of God, to the throne of David, according to the flesh, that there was announced the following judgment:

"Is this man Coniah a despised idol? Is he a vessel wherein is no pleasure? Wherefore are they cast out, he and his seed, and are cast into the land which they knew not? O earth, earth, earth, hear the Word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord, Write ye this man childless, a man that shall not prosper in his days: FOR NONE OF HIS SEED SHALL PROSPER, SITTING UPON THE THRONE OF DAVID, AND RULING ANY MORE IN JUDAH." (Jer., 22, 28-30.)

This declaration did not mean that Jeconiah would never have any children, for the Bible definitely affirms that he did have children. It simply meant that, though his descendants were the only ones entitled to sit on David's throne, none of them ever would. Matthew's geneology precisely shows that the title to the throne of David could only descend through Jeconiah's line, and not any other. Yet have we seen here the Divine judgment, that none of Jeconiah's descendants were ever to sit on David's throne. This simply meant that, as already has been said, heirship to the throne of David in the natural line according to the flesh was for ever done away with. The line of descent would still be maintained, but in a new way. There is certainly One, who can show full title to the throne of David and for ever hold it. Concerning Him, it was the same holy prophet, after he had declared that none of Jeconiah's line, that is, according to the flesh, would ever sit on the throne, just as

distinctly announced the wonderful fact, that: "David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel." And the prophet had been inspired of God to precisely say Who this very Man was to be. Here, is told the new thing, in regard to David's throne, the Great God was going to do.

After Coniah, another man certainly did sit on Judah's throne. His name was Mattaniah, changed to Zedekiah, by Nebuchadnezzar, for it was the king of Babylon who had set him there, just as, in similar fashion later on, the Roman Caesar, put Herod, the Usurper, on the same throne. Neither of them would seem to have had any right to the throne of Judah. Both were put there by men, not by God. Coniah was still living in Babylon, while this Zedekiah sat by permission of Nebuchadnezzar, on his throne. Herod, also occupied the throne, when our Lord, born as the Rightful King, was a homeless wanderer. Yet is it through some presumed descendant of this Babylonian made king, Zedekiah, British Israel authorities, want us to believe our own royal family now occupy Israel's throne, which has mysteriously been transported to London, England.

The theory is romantic, but not at all in harmony with Divine Truth.

"In those days, and at that time (that is, when David's natural descendants have ceased to have right to the throne), will I cause the Branch of Righteousness to grow up unto David; and He shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land. In those days Judah shall be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely, and this is the name wherewith she shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness." (Jer., 13, 15-17.) The reference to Judah and Jerusalem dwelling safely, clearly shows the prophecy refers to what yet has to be. And, surely, it is Christ Who is here spoken about as being the Righteous Branch, Who only has the right to reign on the throne of David.

Why is Jerusalem here called the Lord our Righteousness? Because it is the city of the Great King and as such bears His very Name. For, the Lord our Righteousness is the name of our Redeemer.

"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth.

In His days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is His name whereby He shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS." (Jer., 23, 6.)

It is about this same Righteous Branch, thus foretold to be raised up, was written: "Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel." Of Him also was it, Isaiah prophesied: "Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end, UPON THE THRONE OF DAVID, AND UPON HIS KINGDOM, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth, even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts shall perform this." (Isa., 9, 7.)

And it also was of the time of this wonderful reign, yet going to be, that there is given us the wonderful declaration of Isaiah 2:

"The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

"And it shall come to pass in the LAST DAYS, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And He shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

There are many other equally glorious Old Testament prophecies, telling of the time when great David's greater Son is to sit on the throne of His father David. For He is that Righteous Branch, God was foretold to raise up unto David, so that as King He is to reign.

That only is why the first Gospel begins: "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of David." For it was of Him, the angel of God made wonderful declaration to her who was to be the virgin mother: "Thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a Son, and shalt call His name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto Him the

throne of His father David: and He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end." (Luke, 1, 31.)

Also because of all this, when our Redeemer was finally rejected of the Jews, He then declared how that, one day, "they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." And, "When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory." (Matt., 25, 31.)

Now, all of these sayings show three things plainly. First, that with Jeconiah, the heirship in the natural line, to the throne of David, according to the flesh was for ever abolished. Second, that God was going to raise up a Righteous Branch unto David, to sit on David's throne. This, plainly, was to be, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. And third, that Jesus Christ is that Righteous Branch concerning Whom it is definitely affirmed that He is to sit on the throne of David, and Who also, Himself, solemnly intimated that He will yet come through the opened heavens, and then will sit upon His throne, which is the throne of David.

What more is now to be said? Only this. When British-Israelism asserts that the House of Hanover is the House of David, and that England's reigning sovereign is now on the throne as David's heir, according to the flesh, then is there surely indicated an appalling ignorance of the Sacred Scriptures. It also implies a shocking misunderstanding of the Divine purpose in regard to the glory which belongs to Christ alone.

Now, it is only when the time has come for our Lord to sit on the throne of His glory that there will happen what is so plainly stated in the two Scriptures we have taken from Daniel: "And the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth." "And in the days of these kings shall the God of Heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed." And that brings us

Back to Nebuchadnezzar's Dream,

and what led up to it. Among the young princes of Jeconiah's house, carried away to Babylon, was Daniel, who came ultimately to be one of the king's counsellors. It is

then told how that: "In the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, he dreamed dreams, wherewith his spirit troubled him, and his sleep brake from him." The dream no magician, astrologer or sorcerer could interpret. Because of their failure, they were all to be slain. Daniel and the other young princes were also to be slain. Daniel then sought for time, and with the other godly young men, gave himself over to prayer that God would reveal the secret of the dream.

Here now should we carefully notice that Nebuchadnezzar's dream was of God. To this man, it is plainly stated that the God of Heaven gave him his mighty dominion. And through this first great ruler, at the beginning of what our Lord called "The Times of the Gentiles," God would give, for the understanding of His people, this wonderful dream of unfolding human history. The magicians and sorcerers failed, because in no other way than from God, as Daniel knew well, can the future be known. It is because of that, I am now asking my readers to examine with me the process by which the revelation came. Daniel besought his companions, in regard to the whole matter, to give themselves with him to prayer: "That they would desire mercies of the God of Heaven concerning this secret." It was prayer that did it.

"Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision." Because of which, Daniel gave heartfelt thanks, saying, "Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are His: and He changeth the times and the seasons: He removeth kings, and setteth up kings: He giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge unto them that know understanding: He revealeth the deep and secret things: He knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with Him."

This saying of Daniel's shows how well he knew that behind every changing phase of this world's history and government there is always in operation the unerring purpose of the great God. That is why, when he stands in the presence of the Babylonian king, he is able to say, that though men could never make known to the king the dream and its interpretation: "But there is a God in Heaven, that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days."

The Dream.

What Daniel shows is, that it was a dream of unfolding human history. It was a vision of history given beforehand. As we have seen, what the dream was given to show, was the history of universal human government, during the whole period of time, our Lord called, "The Times of the Gentiles." In that dream of the night, it was a bright and colossal image, with the outlines and features of a man, that stood before Nebuchadnezzar, the first world ruler of the Gentile times.

The appearance of the image was glorious, yet most terrible to behold. The head glittered with gold. Breast and arms were shining silver. Body and thighs were glowing brass. The legs were as great iron pillars. The feet and toes were mingled iron and clay. Somewhere, then in the background, was there a mountain. From this mountain, without any human instrumentality, there was detached a stone, which, with a mighty crash, fell upon the feet of the image, breaking them to pieces, and thus ground the whole of the mighty appearance to dust. This the wind blew away, so that not even the particles could be seen, while the stone which had caused the terrific catastrophe itself became a great mountain, which then filled the whole earth.

That was the dream of the night that came to the mighty Gentile ruler. According to Daniel, it was God Who put that dream into Nebuchadnezzar's mind. By it, we are told, God was making known what was to be in the latter days. The whole thing was expressive of history that was yet to unfold. By this image, the end was being made known from the beginning. "As for thee, O king, thy thoughts came into thy mind upon thy bed, what should come to pass hereafter: and He that revealeth secrets maketh known to thee what shall come to pass."

So then, the dream really contains the Divine presentation, from the beginning of the whole course of Gentile dominion in the world, from Nebuchadnezzar, and right away through to the very close of the Times of the Gentiles. It includes the entire period during which the people of Israel are reject from the purpose of God, and their land is trodden under foot of alien nations. It also comprises the whole of this present Gospel Age, during which, through

Gospel ministry, the Lord is gathering out of the nations a people unto His Name. It was this very thing was said by James in the first Church Council ever held. "Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for His name, and to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, after this I will return, and will build again the Tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles upon whom thy name is called, saith the Lord, Who doeth all these things. Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world." (Acts, 15, 14-18.)

In all of this we surely see what absolute harmony there is in the whole of prophetic Scripture. What James affirmed was that, when Christ by the Holy Ghost, through Gospel ministry, has completed and taken out of the world His Church, then will He return to the earth to complete His further work, in setting up again the house of David, and establishing once more David's throne. It is all that, we have already seen from the other Scriptures, that God is yet going to do. And the purpose of Nebuchadnezzar's dream image was that the entire governmental history of the world might be known, right down to the close of the Times of the Gentiles, at which time the Kingdom of Heaven will have come to be set up over the whole earth. It was that, was definitely affirmed by Daniel before Nebuchadnezzar.

"Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee: and the form thereof was terrible. This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass. His legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors: and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth."

is as clear as day for those who will receive it. "This is the dream: and we will tell the interpretation before the king.

"Thou, O king, art a king of kings; for the God of Heaven hath given thee a kingdom, and power, and strength and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all." (Dan., 2, 37.)

So that the head of gold, in the image, represented the world-wide empire of Babylon. It was God gave that vast dominion to Nebuchadnezzar for, as Daniel affirmed, it is God that removeth kings and setteth up kings. All men everywhere were then placed under the power of Babylon's emperor. But, this empire was not to last for ever. "After thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee." This other kingdom was shown to be the Medo-Persian empire, which, under Cyrus, replaced Babylon, in the year 528 B.C.

That also would pass away. "And another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth." This also is shown to refer to Greece, which, under Alexander the Great, defeated the Persian emperor, Darius, so that thus came to be established the third universal empire, which God, through the dream image, was making known what was going to be.

Then there was to be a fourth kingdom, which was to be "strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise."

This last reference is to the fourth, or Roman Empire, which came to its fulness under Caesar Augustus in the year 31 B.C., when Antony and Cleopatra were defeated at the battle of Actium, though it was in 63 B.C. the Grecian empire was overthrown. This was to be the empire in existence when Christ was to come the first time. Daniel told how that the distinctive characteristic of this empire was that it would break and bruise. Was it not written of our Redeemer that He was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities? It was under the authority of the Roman empire Christ died. Three times over, the pro-

phecy had been recorded that He must be delivered to the Gentiles, by the chief priests and scribes, to be mocked and scourged and then crucified. (Matt., 20, 19; Mark, 10, 33; Luke, 18, 32.) How literal and exact is every word of Divine prophecy! Daniel had not much to tell Nebuchadnezzar of the fourth of the great empires of Gentile times, apart from its terrific iron-like character. This may have been because that the career of this empire belongs entirely to New Testament times. It is in the second chapter of Luke, we learn of that kingdom claiming to have world sovereignty. Caesar Augustus could issue his decree that all the world should be taxed. Then also do we read of the might of the Caesars in breaking, bruising and crushing all other nations, crucifying God's Blessed Son, slaying the Lord's apostles, utterly destroying the Holy City and carrying away the Jews into captivity, and ever reddening the earth everywhere with the blood of Christ's martyrs.

As a Beast.

It is no wonder, then, that in the vision of the Roman empire, as given later to Daniel, the fourth empire should be described in specially fearful expression. "After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth; it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it." (Dan., 7, 7.)

As was written by the historian Gibbon: "The empire of the Romans filled the world. And when that empire fell into the hands of a single person, the world became a safe and drear prison for his enemies. To resist was fatal; and it was impossible to fly."

It will only be in a later chapter we shall be able to consider the startling implications of the vision, in regard to the deteriorating quality of the metals comprising this great dream image of human history. Now, we simply note that the vision showed there were only to be four world empires, and no more. Human history can only tell of four such empires since the days of Nebuchadnezzar. Czar, Peter the Great, had hoped to have world dominion for Russia. We know now, how far away Russia is from any such achievement. Spain, at one time, almost had the world within its grasp, but God sent out His winds, and scattered her mighty

fleets, and now, scarce any kingdom is more humble. Napoleon Bonaparte also came very close to achieving world dominion, but Wellington's Guards at Waterloo, under God, with their last wonderful charge, in one short half hour smashed for ever any such possibility. It is now realised that before the Great World War, the German Kaiser fully believed the time had come for the realisation of the dream of world dominion. But his nation was broken and he himself was driven into exile.

Thus has it been, only because, 2500 years ago, God caused it to be made known that until the day in which Christ will take over the rule of this world, there was only going to be four such world empires, and not one more.

A Resurrected Empire.

It is that there is yet going to be, according to the dream image of Nebuchadnezzar. The fourth empire is to be in actual existence, but in a ten kingdom form, when the stone is to strike the image upon the feet. The universal sovereignty of the old Roman empire passed away, but only, as God showed through the image it would. At the first the empire divided into two divisions, as was indicated by the image's two legs. In this connection, history shows that from 800 A.D., to the fall of Constantinople in 1453 A.D., that is, for six and a half centuries, there were two emperors, one at Rome, the other at Constantinople. This fact is still symbolised by the two-headed eagle, looking east and west, on the arms of Russia and Austria.

But the image showed that the fourth empire would be found ultimately divided into ten divisions. And here is a significant feature of the prophetic future as made known through the image. The first empire was to be a single entity. The second was to be twofold in its expression. The third was to split into four. The fourth, in its last expression, was to ultimately become ten. The ten toes of the image simply represent ten kingdoms, apparently in close federation, on the basis, and also embracing precisely the same territory that was once held by ancient Rome. In Daniel's vision of the seventh chapter the ten horns of the fourth beast are definitely said to be ten kings. Now ten kings implies ten kingdoms. In both the thirteenth and seventeenth chapters of the book of Revelation are given

visions of like character and purpose to those we have seen in the book of Daniel. Only in the book of Revelation, it is the future expression, in regard to the fourth great empire, that has mention. There it is spoken of as the "Beast that was, is not, and shall ascend." That is, it is a future revival, or resurrection, of the Roman empire that in the Revelation is foretold. Though, at the time of that future revival, the resuscitated empire is to have a ten kingdom form. And this has to be in the very last days of Gentile dominion in the world, because of what Daniel was given to make known in the presence of the king Nebuchadnezzar: "In the days of these kings shall the God of Heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever." (Dan. 2, 44.)

Another significant feature is made remarkably clear in regard to this Latter Time resurrection of the Roman Empire. In its ten kingdom form it will have in it the elements of both Imperialism and Democracy as these are set forth by the iron and clay of the feet of the image. And in this ten kingdom form the revived empire is to continue until this last expression of Gentile government in the world is finally crushed out of existence, by the falling of the "stone cut out without hands," or, as the Divine interpretation gives it, the inauguration of the Kingdom, which in the days of those kings the God of Heaven is to set up.

So that, from these things we learn, how that, in the last days of the Times of the Gentiles, ten kingdoms will be found in close alliance, and then having the ancient city of Rome as their centre and capital. The territory to be included, in their united dominion, is to take in all that was once in the possession of the fourth empire. This actually is to be a resurrection of Rome, the fourth world empire of the Times of the Gentiles. And here, now, is a thing of intense significance. Out of the terrific circumstance of the Great War there have arisen conditions which

would seem to indicate that the process of the resurrection of ancient Rome is already in actual operation. It is

A Startling Sign of the Times.

Here is how one recent writer speaks of it: "The feet of iron mingled with clay have grown extensively and protruded themselves down to the present times, and we can clearly see the formation of the toe kingdoms at the extremities of these great feet!"

He then goes on to say: "Looking at the map of Europe, readjusted since 1914, and comparing it with the old Roman Empire which was washed by the waters of the Mediterranean Sea, we can almost trace the last Gentile world dominion gradually working up into ten kingdoms, thus: on the west, that is to say reckoning the toes on the west foot of the image, we have the kingdoms of Britain, France, Spain, Italy and Austria; and on the east foot of the image, there are the kingdoms of Egypt, Syria, Turkey, the Balkan States and Greece. These have not all formed themselves into established monarchies—some of them yet are in the making; but prophecy is fast fulfilling itself; France is agitating for a Dictator, i.e., the rule of one man, a king, in short; the present agitation in Europe may probably end in establishing the Balkan States into a separate kingdom. These may not be the actual divisions into which the old Roman Empire will separate itself; but this we know, that at the End Time (and that time is not far distant), in this area of the Revived Roman Empire, there will be a commonwealth of kingdoms which will in their number and governmental existence exactly carry out the prophecy of the ten toes formed of miry clay and iron, with an overlordship of the last Gentile World Emperor."

I do earnestly believe that here an examination of a map of the Roman Empire as it was can show that there is now going on a reforming of the ancient boundaries of Rome, the geographical territory of which once included such countries in Europe as England and Southern Scotland, but not Ireland; France and Belgium, but not Holland; Prussia, west of the Rhine only; Switzerland, Italy, Turkey and Greece; Roumania and portions of Austria, including Servia, Bosnia and Bulgaria. In Asia, also, there were the countries of Assyria and Mesopotamia, and in Africa,

Egypt and the whole Northern coast, taking in Morocco, Algiers and Tripoli, each of which is now under suzerainty to one or other of the European Powers already mentioned.

The Changing of National Boundaries.

Since the close of the World War, in the light of Divine Prophecy, the rearranging of national boundaries has been most significant. For instance, there is Alsace-Lorraine. This section was in old Roman territory, but for many decades past had been joined to Germany. The States of Austria-Hungary, some of which were under ancient Rome, while others were not, were also broken off from Germany, which was never included in the fourth world empire. The seizing and occupation of the Ruhr Valley, and all the German territory west of the Rhine, have also had their deep interest for students of Prophecy, because the Rhine river was here the boundary of Imperial Rome.

There has also been the surrender by England of Home Rule to Ireland, which country was never at any time either, a portion of the Roman Empire. While, in India, it is well known that the non-co-operative movement is seeking to compel Britain there also to withdraw from actual government rule. There have also been the granting of national independence to Egypt, the recognition of Syria's sovereignty, the setting free and rehabilitation of Palestine, and Turkey again, coming into prominence, in relation to Europe's destiny.

Here, we remember, that in the closing moments of the resurrected Roman Empire, the division of it is to be into ten kingdoms. In the year 1870, the territory of old Rome was held by 23 nations; now the number is 16. International movements are now known to be in active operation that very quickly can bring the number down to 10.

Mussolini and Italy.

It is in regard to Italy, and its present astonishing ruler, that there are to be seen the clearest indications of the resurrection of the glory of ancient Rome. In the years immediately following the close of the Great War Italy was helplessly falling to pieces. Communism was making government impossible, and what had recently before happened in Russia seemed coming at once to Italy. It was

then, appeared Mussolini, surely one of the most outstanding personalities the world has ever known. One of the shrewdest men in the city of London, Lord Sydenham, has recently spoken of Mussolini as being actually a "superman," and truly, in regard to certain outstanding characteristics of the great Italian's life, the title would really seem to be very well merited. It was in October, 1922, Mussolini assumed personal responsibility for his country's fortunes by his famous march on Rome at the head of an hastily organised army of ill-equipped men. As was said by Viscount Rothermere: "To most northern eyes that enterprise seemed at first no more than a desperate incident of Italy's impending collapse into Bolshevism. The Italian nation was virtually at civil war. Railways, posts and telegraphs, police and other essential services were hopelessly disorganised. Industry had been paralysed for several years by revolutionary strikes. Government had lost all effective authority. Parliament was a feeble confusion of conflicting cliques."

After showing how that had Italy then gone under to Bolshevism, no country in Europe could at that time very well have escaped the same fate, Viscount Rothermere goes on to say:

"Our escape from so great a danger we owe to Mussolini alone, who, from being the editor of a small nationalist newspaper and the founder of the patriotic association called the Fascisti, not only carried through a bloodless revolution, but has since given his country the most efficient government in Europe. There can be no doubt," says this distinguished journalist, "as to the verdict of future generations on his achievements. He is the greatest figure of our age. Mussolini will probably dominate the history of the twentieth century as Napoleon dominated that of the nineteenth."

Mussolini's Aim.

Without doubt this Mussolini is surely a very extraordinary man. His power over the Italian people is remarkable. Shortly after his first triumph, when referring to his defiance of the League of Nations, he said: "If I had said to the Italian people, 'March,' there is no doubt that this ardent people would have marched." That is, in opposition to the expressed will of the other nations of the world.

At his demand an entirely new electoral constitution has come into force. By this Mussolini now would seem to have practically unlimited power. And, strange though it may seem, much of the legislation this extraordinary man is literally forcing on the Italian people, is generally to be commended. He claims to be the man who is to purify the soul of Italy. A while ago he said: "Within a short time I shall ask Parliament to pass a set of laws. Every paragraph of these laws shall be obeyed. No newspaper will be permitted to publish items that a devout, self-respecting man or woman would hesitate to read to his children from the first paragraph to the last. Any newspaper that fails to come up to my standard will be destroyed. Any editor, or writer, who attempts to violate the spirit of this dictum will be severely punished. If a fine and imprisonment fail to bring immoral or seditious editors to their senses my Blackshirts will revive that remedy which cured Socialists of their frothings."

It is said that newspapers have been reduced to six pages, and no sports, social functions, art exhibitions, crimes or foreign news can be published.

What is the goal of all Mussolini's effort? Simply the revival of the ancient Roman Empire. Not long ago he said: "There can be no turning back. We shall ever march onward towards that Imperial Rome which is our dream and our faith."

As was affirmed to this effect by a recent writer in the "Forum": "I believe from the conversation of two of his lieutenants that what the Italian superman is aiming at is a sort of Holy Roman Empire—at the head of it God and His superman. In the dictator's own words: 'Powerful as in the days of the first Empire of Augustus, Rome must again become the wonder of the world. I am the State. I, because of God, I am called. I, because I am the superman incarnate, even as that Napoleon of whom I secretly believe I am the incarnation, was the heaven-sent. I, because like Napoleon, I am lawgiver as well as war lord.' "

In a newspaper article dated from Rome, entitled "Mussolini Works While Italy Feasts," the following statement was made: "While millions of Italians were feasting to-day in honor of the New Year, Premier Mussolini remained hard at work. He presided at a Cabinet meeting at

which he outlined the precise duties of each Government Minister in an effort to construct an ideal empire and make Rome within five years rival, in vastness, power and grandeur, the Rome of Emperor Augustus."

Rome is being restored, with a view, in harmony with Mussolini's own plans, of bringing back its ancient grandeur. To this end millions of money are now being spent each year. This one great objective is being constantly kept before the entire Italian people. In a two-and-a-half-hour speech Mussolini pictured the Italy of ten years hence, overflowing with humanity, armed with the most perfect weapons of modern science and capable of throwing five million men on the battlefield between 1935 and 1940.

To bring about this restoration of the glory of ancient Rome Mussolini is seeking to make alliances and set up treaties with all the nations that were once comprised in the fourth great prophetic empire. He has expressed the desire for Italy to take over the Holy Land. He claims that "the Mediterranean Sea must again become a Roman lake." No wonder, then, the eyes of multitudes are now towards Italy and its amazing Dictator.

At anyrate, in all this, Divine prophecy is being literally fulfilled in the eyes of the whole world. Between the Rapture of the redeemed Church from the earth to be with Christ in the Heavens and the appearing of our Lord in His glory, there is going to be a brief interval of years. Things then on the earth will culminate fast. Mussolini may, or may not, be the personality who is to bring in the final condition. But the Stone cut out of the mountain without hands is to fall on the feet of the image. The Stone is to become a great mountain that will fill the whole earth. "And in the days of those kings shall the God of Heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed." Then shall our Redeemer Lord sit on the throne of His glory.

It was He Who said: "When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads, FOR YOUR REDEMPTION DRAWETH NIGH."

My reader, "Be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not, the SON OF MAN COMETH."

CHAPTER X.

The Sign of Democracy.

"There is a God in Heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days." (Dan. 2, 28.)

Here is something that should induce earnest thought. It is that the Divine purpose behind what was revealed, through the Babylonian king, was intended to make known what shall be in the latter days. This, with the frequent mention, by Daniel, of the things that then are to be, would surely indicate that the ultimate end of everything is what God desires His people to have steadfastly in view. The same thing is as clearly seen in what was spoken by the angel to Daniel, concerning what then is to be in regard to the Jews. "I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days: for yet the vision is for many days." (Dan. x:14.) So that what was made known through the king, concerned conditions among the nations in the latter days, while the prophetic vision through the prophet, had to do with what would happen to Daniel's own people, the Jews, at precisely the same time.

It is the End That Matters.

God thus seeks to let us know what is to be in the latter days in order that we may be fully prepared for what is at their close to be. This only can be the reason why so many identifying signs are given. By them, solemn intimation is to be received that the end of all things is at hand. Our Lord's exhortation regarding precisely similar conditions to unfold in the time of the end, makes the whole thing plain: "Be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh." (Matt. 24:44.) The clear connection of these words with Nebuchadnezzar's dream image, is seen in Daniel's declaration concerning its consummation: "In the days of these kings shall the God of Heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed."

If we are among the saved then, we are to enter into everlasting felicity and blessedness: if we are not then among those who have before received the salvation of God, we shall be for ever lost. Saved or lost! This for every one of us is the eternal issue. There is a broad road, and there is a narrow way. The one leads to destruction, the other to life eternal. What is to be is clearly stated. "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power." (2 Thes. 1:7.) When the God of Heaven has set up on earth the Kingdom which never will be destroyed, the men and women of this Age, who have rejected the Divine Son, will then be rejected of God. For it was surely about anyone then found without a wedding garment, the solemn thing was spoken: "Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." (Matt. 22:13.)

Hence the urgency of us being well informed regarding what God has made known concerning the latter days. Do notice particularly the time of the condition now under consideration. It is to be in the LATTER DAYS. The end will not then be far away. The latter days! Are they not now here? Indeed, every Divinely foretold sign in regard to the latter days seems everywhere in distinct operation. Here we now go on to see this, in connection with recent developments concerning the government of this unhappy old world. It is specially in regard to that, the Divine message was given. "God maketh known what shall be in the latter days."

The Dream Image.

In Nebuchadnezzar's wonderful dream we already have seen, how that from its four different kinds of metal, world history was only ever to have, in its unfolding, four great universal empires, those of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome. There never has been any other. Every effort to bring about the achievement of such dominion has inevitably failed. In that regard, world history has unfolded pre-

cisely as was betokened, more than two thousand five hundred years ago, through the king of Babylon's dream. The great iron legs of the image foretold the latter twofold division of the Roman Empire, and also showed how that in the time of the end, in the latter days, when the God of Heaven is about to set up on the earth His everlasting kingdom, ten kings would then be found reigning over the territory that once was Rome. In the days of these kings, the stone "cut out of the mountain without hands" is to smite the feet of the image, with its toes of iron and clay, so as to sweep that which is therein represented, completely from the face of the earth.

The Iron and Clay.

The whole of the dream image was not composed of the same material. In the image were four metals—gold, silver, brass and iron—the last being blended with miry clay, the clay being the last to appear. In the arrangement of the metals there is clearly indicated distinct Divine purpose. That this is so is not at all difficult for anyone to perceive, especially when the order in which the metals are stated is considered. The head was of gold, the feet were of iron mingled with clay. J. Charleton Steen has issued an interesting table showing the values, gravity and tenacity of these metals, as in the year 1918:

	Values. £ s. d.		Weights. Specific gravity.	Tenacity.
Gold ..	3 17 10½	per oz. troy	19.3	150
Silver..	0 4 0	Do.	10.5	187
Brass ..	0 0 ¾	Do.	8.94	302
Iron ...	⅛ of ¼d.	Do.	7.79	549
Clay ...	Nil	Do.	2.2	Nil

Such a statement is decidedly illuminating. Not only does it show depreciation as to value and weight in regard to the metals composing the image, but it also indicates another important matter. With the depreciation as to actual value and weight, there is seen a tremendous increase as to tenacity. So that, while the value of iron is infinitesimal compared with the value of gold, the tenacity of iron is nearly four times greater than that of the more valuable metal. As to value and weight, the metals show a decided

depreciation, while, in regard to tenaciousness or toughness, there is terrific development.

Every feature thus indicated is of interest. The deteriorating quality in the metals of the dream image, clearly show that from the Divine viewpoint, as time went on, human government would greatly depreciate in regard to its value and weight, while growing rapidly in the ironlike quality of tenaciousness which may also mean obstinacy and stubbornness. At the same time, the iron, not standing alone, but being mingled with clay, which has neither value nor tenacity, would also signify an exceeding weakness.

At anyrate, from all of this, we can see that the Divine standard as to weights and values, in regard to this world's affairs, is very different to that of ours. When God caused it to be said to Nebuchadnezzar: "Another kingdom shall arise after thee inferior to thee," it was not with the intention of making it known, that the inferiority of the Medo-Persian empire would relate to either power or tenacity, but as to weight and value, as from the eternal viewpoint. The human tendency has been for ever downwards, from the first day sin entered. No matter the condition wherein man has been placed and tried, individually, collectively and nationally, the result is always the same. It is not evolution, but devolution that has characterised the whole of human experience.

The king of Babylon's dream image was the Divinely presented symbol of the form of government that would operate throughout this world, for the whole period of what the Bible mentions as the "Times of the Gentiles." Each of the great world empires was really stronger in regard to power and territory than was its immediate predecessor, but as to the true quality and character of its government, the further it got away from the beginning the greater was its depreciation, so far as the eternal good of the people was concerned, until the clay and iron of the end time is reached.

Interpretation.

What has already been said may help our understanding of the strange words spoken by the servant of God in the presence of Nebuchadnezzar. "Thou, O king, art a king of kings." Notice the difference. In the New Testament

our blessed Lord is seen emerging through the opened heavens as "KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS." Babylon's king was A king of kings, our coming Redeemer is "THE KING OF KINGS." Nebuchadnezzar was absolute monarch, a supreme despot. To him was it said: "The God of Heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power and strength and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath He given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all."

"Thou Art This Head of Gold."

The governing power entrusted to Nebuchadnezzar was really the nearest, in regard to the extent of its authority, to that of Heaven the world has ever known. The head rules the body absolutely. The king of Babylon was like that, absolute monarch. As was afterwards said to Belshazzar, Nebuchadnezzar's degenerate descendant on the throne, "O thou king, the Most High God gave Nebuchadnezzar thy father a kingdom, and majesty, and glory and honor. . . . Whom he would he slew, and whom he would he kept alive, and whom he would he set up, and whom he would be put down." (Dan. 5: 18, 19). The king in that former time could do as he would.

The authority and the power was from God. For it was the God of Heaven that had given Nebuchadnezzar his kingdom and his power. It is to be the same kind of government that is to operate during the Millennial reign of our Blessed Lord over the whole earth. But then He is to reign in righteousness, and of His kingdom there is to be no end. What Babylon's mighty king could not do, is to be done by the Son of God. Like all other men, Nebuchadnezzar proved a failure. So that after sixty-six years, the gold of the image passed away. Then arose the kingdom of inferior authority. God has caused it to be said: "After thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee"; so that just as silver is of less quality than gold, so would the supremacy of governmental power be diminished in its quality. The Persian empire might command the mightiest armies the world had ever seen, yet no such concentration of power could give to the throne that autocratic supremacy which had been held by Nebuchadnezzar. Nor did the

twenty satrapies associated with Darius in the government of his vast empire have unitedly the power of the former, for the kingdom was now governed by the "laws of the Medes and Persians," and not by the rule of a supreme autocrat. This fact is illustrated in the experience of Darius, who was so bound himself to these laws, that although he tried his best to deliver Daniel from his enemies, he was powerless to prevent the prophet from being cast into the den of lions.

The third great world empire was that of Greece, the further inferiority of which was indicated by a similar deterioration in the value of the metal. The inferiority of the brass could not relate to the extent of the empire embraced, for the territory conquered and dominated by Alexander the Great was much vaster than that included in either of the two preceding world empires. For, as Daniel declared would happen, the kingdom of Greece actually assumed rule over all the earth, and so vast was the dominion achieved by Alexander through conquest, that he is said to have wept that there were no other worlds left for him to conquer. The Macedonian empire possessed features indicating a tremendous exaltation of the human intellect. The ancient Greek has indeed been unrivalled in art and letters. There are tracts of human thought in which he has never ceased to hold supremacy, yet we learn that though Alexander had come to the throne of this mighty empire, he did not hold that measure of governing power held by either the Babylonian emperor or even the Persian ruler. The government of Greece was in reality that of a military caste.

Then came the last of the four great empires—the Roman—which was as iron in its prophetic character, breaking in pieces, beating, crushing, subduing, and hammering all opposition, so that imperial Rome ultimately swallowed up all preceding empires, and came to wield a universal sceptre. The influence of its iron rule is still evidenced all over the earth. For Roman codes have been for long the basis of this world's laws. Its iron rule, hard, destructive and invincible, ran its roadways to the ends of the earth.

But as iron is more common than any of the other metals, so was it in regard to the rule of Rome's emperors. This was at first, nominally, and then actually dependent

on the caprice and will of the people. Yet did it maintain the character of iron. For while the emperor was assumed to owe his power entirely to the people, and actually had, in many instances, himself risen from the humblest rank, nevertheless the emperor became absolute monarch as soon as he had ascended the throne, and often treated the Senate, which had nominated him to rule, as being of no importance. That is why, although he derived his power from the common source, and held it by an uncertain tenure while it lasted, his rule indicated the strength and the coarseness of iron. And that iron, as is seen in the image, would continue right on to the end, but in the latter days would then be seen to be mixed with miry clay, partly strong and partly broken. "And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potter's clay, and part of iron, it shall be a divided kingdom; but there shall be in it the strength of iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay, and as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly broken (R.V. marg., brittle). And whereas thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men; but they shall not cleave one with the other, even as iron doth not mingle with clay."

In all of that we have thus learned how, 2500 years ago, the great God precisely indicated the exact lines along which human government would develop right on to its very last stages. It was to begin with the rule of autocracy, as symbolised by gold, the most precious of metals, and would come to end in the rule of democracy, as indicated by clay, the commonest of all materials of which this earth is composed. The startling significance of the teaching therein stated is strikingly intensified by the amazing events of more recent years. And here again should the fact be emphasised that those secrets then revealed by the God of Heaven specially concerned what is to happen in the latter days. It is in the time of the end when the wicked through their wickedness shall not be able to understand, but it is just at that same time the Scriptures declare that the wise shall understand.

The Wonder of Divine Prophecy.

Those who study the Sacred Scriptures very well know that the words of God's inspired prophets are literally and precisely being fulfilled. Down to the last detail all history has developed exactly as was foretold through Daniel. In a time when the majority of men were slaves, with absolutely no voice whatever in the affairs of their nation, God showed through His servant that human government would change from that of absolute autocracy down to the widest possible form of democracy. Consider carefully what is revealed through Nebuchadnezzar's dream image, and the precise harmony of what is thus made known with every detail of unfolding human history is at once apparent. The change was not predicted to happen suddenly. Every possible form of human government was to be permitted adequate opportunity of expression. After the Autocrat was to come the rule of some of the people, then that of a greater number, and at last would be the rule of all the people for themselves.

It was that was clearly the meaning of the depreciating value of the metals of the image down to the clay at the end. And clay is distinctly of the earth. It stood for that which had no real relationship at all to the metals of the image, but represented a foreign element brought in. The metals represented monarchies; the clay stands for the rule of Democracy. It is that has now come to be everywhere among men. The nations of the earth are now governed by the deliberately chosen representatives of the people. While even the very last stage of the clay and iron government, that yet has to be, before the actual appearing of God's Son from Heaven, that in which the Devil's Anti christ will be supreme, will also be of the people's freewill choice. It was that was said by our Lord. "I have come in my Father's name, me ye will not receive; if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive."

So that this rule of democracy had to come. It was not because God wanted it. For He has shown us from the beginning that, ultimately, democracy will really be the greatest failure of all. The Almighty simply made known what surely was going to be. The Divine Word cannot be broken. Democracy now rules, and will continue until Antichrist.

How It Came.

It took a long time for what now is to develop. That also was clearly made known through Nebuchadnezzar's dream image. So also is the fact that the end is to be with a rush, as it were. Such a condition, indeed, has been a distinct feature in regard to the closing days of every age that has preceded ours. Always slowness has characterised the beginning of an age, but rapidity the circumstances of its close. As someone before has said: This age, like others, began slowly. It began like the growth of a flower. There are three stages in the growth of a flower. The flower grows by the seed very slowly. It seems a long while in appearing above the ground. When the stem appears the growth is quicker. And when the stem is fully up the flower seems to rush into bloom. So has it been with this age. It began slowly, and the centuries passed as if nothing important was happening. Then things began to gather speed, and now the rush and rapid sweep of everything would betoken the nearness of the mighty ultimate climax.

For hundreds of years after Christ came there was but little change as to the character of human government. One reigning monarchy might be overthrown, but another would rise up and take its place. But there was never much relief for the people. And the first real appearance of democracy, whose objective was to depose and dethrone monarchy, came at the time of the French Revolution, near the close of the eighteenth century. Many other revolutionary happenings had taken place in earlier times, but these were generally movements to remove bad rulers and set up better ones in their stead, but the French Revolution was an entirely new feature in human experience. It was the attempt of the people to destroy monarchy in order to seize sovereignty for themselves. The Divine right of kings was then roughly brushed aside, and ever since has been scornfully repudiated. In fact, not only was monarchy at that time dethroned, but the amazing attempt was also then made to entirely eliminate the very name and authority of God from the world as well. The worship of the Divine, the recognition of the Sabbath Day, and reverence for the Bible began then rapidly to pass right out of the experience of men and women.

Now here is a significant fact, and one which requires no proof of any kind. It is, that ever since the first appearance of clay in the feet, at the time of the French Revolution, the principles of democracy have been actively spreading everywhere, and clamorously asserting themselves in varied forms and titles, such as Communism, Socialism, Anarchism, Nihilism, and now Bolshevism. Bureaucracy has been brushed aside, and mighty efforts of all kinds have been made by the people in almost every land to shake themselves free from the iron rule of princes. Bombs, daggers, revolvers, revolutions, and wars have all had their part in helping to end the old monarchical despotisms.

Here now is to be seen the rapidity with which the last possible phase of human government is drawing to a close. For within very recent years the world has been quite startled by the rapid overthrow of nearly all of the most ancient of earth's monarchies. Royal houses, the position of which, until very lately, seemed well-nigh impregnable, have been completely obliterated. Until the time of the Great War, in Europe there were twenty-three distinct sovereignties that were reigned over by kings, but only thirteen of such monarchies now remain. Great Britain, Belgium, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Roumania, Bulgaria, Italy and Spain, and one or two other European countries still have their reigning sovereigns, though governing power in regard to the last two named officially is now very much curtailed.

It is only a few years ago since the despotism of Turkey's Sultan used to fill the thought of men with horror. But the Sultan has vanished, and the whole thing he represented has been swept right away like the chaff of the summer threshing floor. Something approximating to modified Socialism now operates throughout Turkey and extreme modern condition is everywhere in evidence.

Until very recently the power of Czardom in Russia seemed eternally fixed, yet was it that in one night the whole thing was smashed to pieces, and in its place has come a strange, mysterious, all-dominating Bolshevism, which surely seems to be the last possible phase of the clay element in regard to human government. There cannot really be anything else that more completely approximates to the iron and clay in the feet and toes of the image.

Only yesterday, practically, the haughty despotism of German Kaiserism seemed all triumphant and secure. The Kaiser actually appeared almost to have the world within his iron grasp. Again, with what tragic swiftness the end came! The haughty Hohenzollerns have also gone the way of the others. Germany is now a Republic with decided Socialistic tendencies.

Portugal also has driven monarchy away, and set up a modern Republic, in which is finding expression some form of government by the people.

Even in China the Manchus, who there, for a thousand years, exercised despotic power, have also been pushed aside and no place any more is found for them. For the whole of China is now also Republican, with apparently strong leanings to Bolshevism.

The Clay.

Thus are we seeing that it is with tragic swiftness that the mighty change in the form of human government is being brought about. It is the introduction of the foreign element, clay, that is doing it. Clay is the most universal thing in the world. Compared with gold, or with any of the other metals in the dream image, it is of no value. But it was there depicted as having place in the very toe ends of the image. Clay is the Divine representation of extreme democratic government. Democracy has come. Democracy is here, now, in every possible form of expression. God knew this universal democratic rule would arise. Thousands of years ago He caused this, the last phase, to be given clearest description. Believers in the Word of God knew that everything which now is had to be. Neither are such surprised that it is coming in so swiftly. So that because of all that is happening now in regard to world government, every understanding Christian firmly believes that the end is not far away. "In the days of these kings shall the God of Heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed." On its throne then will sit our Saviour Jesus Christ, King of kings, Lord of lords, and the kingdom will not be left to other people. "Thou hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue and people; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests; and we shall reign on the earth."

Contributing Circumstances.

Probably one of the chief contributing circumstances leading up to present world conditions has been the increasing facilities for the acquirement of knowledge. This has brought about the development of thought. So that the understanding that has come has made the masses dissatisfied with prevailing world conditions. Under the old order these never seemed equal. Why should the few have everything, while the multitude were never out of sight of absolute poverty? Hundreds of millions out of the world's population seemed never to be above the semi-starvation line. Not long ago it was said regarding conditions in the United States that one per cent. of the population were in possession of more wealth than all the other ninety-nine per cent. of the population put together. The newspaper press became a mighty influence in making known things as they were. The kind of news even people of the lowest order read was that of large numbers of the privileged classes living in licentious luxury, while women and children would be starving to death. Here were descriptions of banquets being given at which the cost is up to £40 a plate. A lady gives a ball, the supper of which cost over £4000. Immediately another lady of wealth determines to eclipse that other social function. For the latter one the fabulous sum of £75,000 was needed to cover all the expenses. And yet another society leader expends £100,000 to throw in the shade all others, with a fancy dress ball she provides for her friends. About the same time report is given of eight wealthy ladies giving an expensive luncheon, with special decorations and other costly arrangements, just for the entertainment of their pet dogs.

As it was expressed by a gifted writer, regarding such people: "To the rich, this enormous wealth means magnificent palaces, gorgeous wardrobes, rare and precious jewellery; it means monkey and baboon dinners, at which money flows as water, at which terrapin is daintily eaten from silver canoes with golden spoons; it means a life where real values are lost, and where money is God."

Side by side with this fearful, sinful and unholy luxury were the poor, and very poor multitudes of the people actually were. As another writer then said: "Poverty means foul hovels, reeking—ah, too often!—with vermin and disease,

filthy rags as substitutes for clothing, a life of forced ignorance, or stunted body, mind and soul, an existence of sickness, crime and death. Wealth and poverty, millionaires and beggars, castles and caves, luxury and squalor, painted parasites on the boulevard and painted poverty among the red lights." Upon a gradually awakening democracy, knowedge in regard to such conditions was bound to lead on to some startling climax. The glaring inequality in regard to human condition was distinctly appalling.

Here was the verdict of Bishop Potter, of New York: "The growth of wealth and of luxury, wicked, wasteful, and wanton, as before God I declare that luxury to be, has been matched step by step by a deepening and deadening poverty." Referring to the awful experience of the unhappy women of the sweat-shops and slaves to the clutching greed of their opulent and lordly masters, old General Booth said: "Across the sunlight comes their death-groan. It is not such a groan as comes from those suddenly hurled out of life, but a slow, grinding, horrible wasting away. You want to see how Latimer and Ridley appeared in the fire? Look at those women and behold a more horrible martyrdom, a hotter fire, a more agonising death."

During recent years for many of the people conditions have much improved. For the measure of improvement that has been, it is the development of the clay element in regard to government that has been mainly responsible. Persistent effort has been made to bring about more equitable conditions. The hours of labor have become shorter, while wages have considerably increased. Still, the anomalies of human experience remain. Irritating inequality continues, specially in regard to the distribution of a rapidly increasing wealth. The rich few continually increase their accumulations, while the universal wage-earner loudly affirms that he is actually no better off.

The Machine Age.

Another contributing circumstance in regard to the new world situation is astonishing development that has taken place as to the means of production. This is the age of machinery. As we already have seen, this also is a sign of the times in regard to the latter days. The machine is swiftly taking the place of the man. One machine can

now more swiftly and also more efficiently produce what formerly would take the strength and skill of a hundred men. In many instances the man is finding his services to be no longer required. What is he to do? Overproduction means increasing unemployment. In Britain there is usually a million and a half of unemployed workers. In the United States there were recently said to be four millions of unemployed. In every other country, new and old, the condition is the same. The stores are bulging out with everything the people need, yet have they to do without, because of unemployment, for through universal overproduction they have no money with which to buy.

The recent visit of the Prince of Wales, heir to the British throne, to nearly one hundred towns and villages of the northern coalfields, was for him a terrible experience. He may never before have realised that so many of his royal father's loyal subjects were living under such heartbreaking conditions.

The long unemployed workers, the barefooted children, with their unhappy mothers and the miserable squalor of the homes, brought sympathetic tears to the eyes of the Prince. Years before, his gracious mother was similarly shocked in visiting the squalid slums of East London to find families of eight living in two rooms.

What is to be done? Who is to blame? The royal house certainly is not. Said the Prince: "I have been deeply touched by the bravery, patience and hope of all these poor people." It was with deep emotion he also said: "It is very difficult to know what to do to solve this most pressing problem." Who knows what to do? The problem is terrific. Though there is no shortage.

This bewildering condition of things, which indeed is world-wide, is not because the Almighty has forgotten the beings to whom He has given life and being. There are those who affirm that a time is surely coming when this world will not be able to sustain its population. That time is not now. Never before in all the history of mankind was the world so chockful of everything man needs. The wealth of the world was never more than now.

Production is going on at a really terrific rate. There is no lack of anything. Take the most advanced country in the world as an illustration, the United States of America.

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In twenty-seven years the aggregate wealth increased from £6,200,000,000 to £14,200,000,000. During every month of that period America created £3,600,000 more wealth than it consumed. In other words, its national wealth increased at the rate of £50,000 an hour. In the language of one of its Senators, "Every time the clock ticks in the dome of the Capitol at Washington the accumulated permanent wealth of this country increases by more than £14." Vast as the total average wealth of the United States must be, yet is that of the Commonwealth of Australia greater. It is said that the total accumulated wealth of our country works out at more than £400 per man, woman and child.

That was how it was years ago. Now the rate of production is greater than ever. Not ever before was there such luxury and licentiousness of living among those who have. As one gifted writer has recently said: "Never was human life so money-ridden and money-mad than to-day." In regard to the moneymakers of our time he says: "God is forgotten and the whole concentration is on money as being the most important thing in the world. Money was once a convenient means of exchange—it is now master and king. There is no particular zest for earning money—a rather slow process—but there is a passion to make it, to hire it out and exact interest and dividends on it."

Foretold.

Surely it was precisely of such a time as ours, now, the prophet wrote: "Their land also is full of silver and gold, neither is there any end of their treasures; their land is full of horses, neither is there any end of their chariots."

I should like you to see that all this was very clearly indicated as the condition of things to be in the time of the end. History shows us that there has been no nation that flourished and fell but had like conditions to what prevails everywhere in the world now. Said Patrick Henry: "We can only judge the future by the past. When Egypt went down, two per cent. of her population owned ninety-seven per cent. of her wealth. The people were starving. When Persia went down, one per cent. of her population owned all the land. When Babylon went down, two per cent. of her population owned all her wealth. When Rome went down, 1800 men owned the known world."

The Apostle James shows that similar conditions are to prevail everywhere when the world is about to go down before the awful appearing of God from Heaven. You will find the prophetic description in chapter 5: 1-8. The time which is spoken of is clearly indicated. It is "in the last days." The counsel given to the Lord's people then is to "wait patiently unto the coming of the Lord." Surely that is a plain intimation of the fact that this condition of things will predominate in the world when the coming of the Lord is to be near at hand.

Here we find a class of rich men described. That seems the only thing worth mentioning about them. They have heaped up vast riches, their gold and their silver are cankered, the rust of which will rise as a witness against them. For the cries of their laborers have entered the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. Their riches have accumulated through certain unfair conditions in regard to those who toiled for them. For the laborer's hire has not been on a right basis.

Then the newly rich also had come to live in wanton pleasure. As it were, they had nourished themselves for a day of slaughter. But the day of reckoning is surely coming. This is to be in the last days, the time of the end, and for all of such a period of awful misery surely is going to be. Then is to be the time of greatest tribulation this world has ever known. "Behold, I will shake mine hand upon them, and they shall be a spoil to their servants." (Zech. 2:9.)

Of course such a message from God's Word does not necessarily mean that all successful business people in the last days are to come under the judgment of God, or that all those then will be found wanton livers. It refers only to those it condemns. Many good men have been much prospered in these remarkable times unto which the world has come. Such are not responsible for conditions over which they have no control. The problem is much greater than that which has to do with the individual. There are certainly all around us most notable examples of astonishing generosity on the part of successful people. Yet are there, surely, many others, concerning whom it is said: "Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days" and "have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton."

Revolution.

The spirit of revolution is now everywhere. It is the terror most dreaded by all ruling authorities. Everywhere people are asking what is to be the end of the strange conditions that have arisen all around us. It is now fully recognised that things cannot go on as they are. Some mighty change must soon be here. Everybody is helpless. Up to the present, every form of government that has been tried has failed. So that the general drift continually has been in the direction of the last possible expression of democratic government. The decided tendency of all democracy now is distinctly towards Communism. Every social upheaval brings the goal nearer. Not Socialism, but Communism, is to be the last phase of human government. No more precise expression in regard to the clay of the image with its mixture of iron seems possible.

The revolution is quickly developing throughout Europe and Asia. The principles now gripping East and West alike are decidedly Communistic. For the Bolshevist emissary is everywhere at work.

The Approaching Hurricane.

A mighty upheaval is thus surely imminent. Great thinkers have long felt the rustling breeze that is heralding the approaching crash. In England, years ago, Benjamin Disraeli wrote: "The social question of to-day is only a zephyr which rustles the leaves, but it will soon become an earthquake." A while later, Professor Ely expressed the same concern: "I must frankly say that I believe we are just beginning to enter a terrible era in the world's history—an era of domestic warfare such as never has been seen, and the end of which God only can see."

Again has it been said by Mr. Lloyd George: "The world is in a state of convulsion, and a bold man would venture to predict what is going to happen." And more recently still: "A new chapter opens in the history of the world with a climax of horror such as mankind has never witnessed." While H. G. Wells declares that: "We have come to the crossroads, and no man knows the way out." And Sir Philip Gibbs affirms that: "No man, unless he is drunk with optimism, can deny that the world is very sick, and it may be a sickness unto death." General Smuts says

that now "Europe is like a sleep-walker on the edge of a precipice."

The Communistic aim in regard to the new form of government for Australia is boldly stated. The same achievement is now being aimed at in regard to the whole world, so we might as well read what it is:

"We believe that there can be no improvement in the lives of the workers until they take power in their own hands. The workers must first of all expropriate the big capitalists, the big financiers, landowners and industrialists. The small property owners they can leave alone until their forces are stronger. But all large property must be confiscated at once without compensation; since to buy out the capitalists, whose power is money, is only to leave them in power.

"The workers' government must nationalise the banks. It must take over all large industrial undertakings, mines and shipping. It must declare all land and houses public property. It must establish a State monopoly of foreign trade. It must annul debts, public and private. At the same time the workers' State must establish at once the new rule of social life; work for all and maintenance for all. It must impose the duty of work on all able to work, and organise the most urgent tasks. It must make equal provision for all, including the old and the sick, according to the resources available. It must take immediate steps to meet the housing shortage by rationing the existing accommodation among the population. It must set up a complete State monopoly of education, establishing common schools for all on a basis of universal free secular education for members of the future workers' society. Only when Capitalism has been fully defeated and Communism established, when the universal organisation of production has got rid of anarchy and strife, and when a new generation has been trained in the new social outlook, will the final transition become possible from the State regulation of Socialism to a free Communist society. But the success of the working-class struggle depends on the existence of a strong, centralised and militant Communist Party to unite all the active workers in the common struggle against Capitalism and carry forward that struggle to its outcome in the seizure of power."

There is certainly, on the surface, not much wrong with a philosophy of government such as that. It suggests decidedly more happier conditions for everybody. The right of all to have an equable share of life's necessities is attractively stated. So that it really is no wonder that distressed democracies of every land and colour and speech are eagerly organising in the hope of its achievement. It is surely the last mighty expression in regard to the clay.

Can it succeed? It is all in the nature of experiment, to say the very least in regard to it. Never before has such a condition been known until now. For eleven years, at least in Russia one hundred and fifty million people have been living under a Communistic regime. With what result? Failure! Every condition has shown it. The people, indeed, may have cheaper amusements, and increasing methods of education, but from the standpoint of eating and drinking and in regard to their wearing apparel and the homes they live in and their hours of toil as well, there is not evidenced the least improvement over conditions prevailing in other lands. Suspicion, distrust, fear are on every side. So far as the outside world can know, general conditions have been not less than appalling. Really millions of valuable lives have been ruthlessly destroyed to bring about a condition of things that surely no sensible person could honestly desire to have reproduced around his own home. Famine conditions have often arisen, during the last eleven years, because under the tyranny of the iron in the clay the land toilers found no profit coming to them to compensate for their long hours of labor on the land.

Yet do we know this thing is coming. God's Word says it is. And as was written by the special correspondent of the London "Chronicle" newspaper at Petrograd:

"There is a collapse of human moral energies, a revival of primitive barbaric instincts, a fierce endeavor to have one's little private will by force. Up through the European chaos is surely creeping the menace of that Bolshevism which is the evil, revengeful shadow of reckless modern materialism. . . . Only the image of the Apocalypse can do justice to the present state of Europe. It is not a political, but a spiritual crisis."

This clever writer goes on to say:

"If the League of Nations is Utopia, then our spiritual

strength is exhausted and civilisation will go down in a welter of barbarous anarchy.

"We have no choice in the matter. If we do not eradicate Bolshevism, Bolshevism will overwhelm us. Bolshevism is not a local Russian experiment in tame pacifist Socialism. It is no Icaria or Oneida. It is essentially international, aggressive, imperialist even. It is out for a world revolution, for the explosion of the whole present form of civilisation.

"Russia is being used simply as a jumping-off ground for this particular purpose. The Bolshevik leaders care not one scrap for Russia itself. By violence they have taken possession of the resources of Russia in order to overthrow existing institutions in all the countries of Western Europe and in America. Russia is for them an experimental station, a training ground, and with the money and arms of the Russian State they aim at advancing through the moral and material wreckage of the Great War and establishing their dictatorship not only in Warsaw, Berlin, Vienna and Budapest, but ultimately in Rome, Paris, London and New York."

It is All to Fail.

It is that is shown all through the Bible. Just as every other form of human government has failed, even so is the last to fail. The Communistic form of government is to be the greatest failure of all. Upon the clay and the iron the stone is to fall, and, like the chaff of the summer threshing floor, it is all to be swept away. It is to bring the world, as it certainly did in Russia, into a welter of blood and of death. So that out of it is to arise the last dread governing personality—the Antichrist.

Why democracy also is going to fail is because its avowed objective is to govern the world independent of God and His Christ. The Communist is deliberately against God and all that relates to Deity. Here is a simple statement from the A.B.C. of Communism, published by the Communist Party of Great Britain, which clearly shows what it is: "It is the task of the Party to impress firmly upon the minds of the workers, even upon the most backward, that religion has been in the past and still is to-day one of the most powerful means at the disposal of the oppressors for the maintenance of inequality, exploitation and slavish

obedience on the part of the toilers. Many weak-kneed Communists reason as follows: 'Religion does not prevent my being a Communist. I believe both in God and in Communism. My faith in God does not hinder me from fighting for the cause of the proletarian revolution.' This train of thought is radically false. Communism and religion are incompatible, both theoretically and practically."

This principle is seen operating in Russia. At one gathering where 3000 soldiers attended, in the Moscow Garrison Club, there took place a monstrous performance called "The Trial of God." The London "Daily Telegraph" reported how that "Russia's anti-religious demonstration has swept through the provinces, where, in a score of cities and towns, effigies of Jehovah, Christ, Moses and Mohammed have been burned while native jazz tunes were played, and boys and girls, members of the League of Communist Youth, danced and sang and kissed. In the provinces it has become quite an 'anti-religion week,' and attacks on present-day, as well as ancient, beliefs are continuing."

While at a festival held in Petrograd a while ago three figures were erected on a scaffold, representing God, Christ, and the Virgin Mary. These figures were beheaded in the presence of a crowd. This surely was intended as the direct challenge of advanced democracy against God.

Communistic Russia as a nation is deliberately turning away from God. This is seen in regard to the great moral principles that have come to us from God through the Divine Scriptures. Up to December 31, 1926, marriages in Russia had at least to be registered; from that date onwards, not only can divorce be obtained (as before) by the request of either party, but now the marriage need not be registered at all. That means the deliberate rejection of the great moral law, to maintain as between man and woman, that was set up in the beginning by the Holy God.

In relation to the young, it is affirmed that, "We must not rest content with the expulsion of religious propaganda from the school, but we must see to it that the school assumes the offensive against religious propaganda in the home."

Now, Where Are We?

There is but one answer to such a question. We are in the latter days, preceding the emergence of God's Son from Heaven. We should believe the Bible, God's Word. The Blessed Book shows its reliability. Every page of human history has unfolded precisely according to what was therein written thousands of years ago. The end of all things seems right upon us.

From eternity God has seen that end, and made it known to us in the Scriptures. We see it drawing nearer every day. Do not forget that, according to the principles of democracy, anything becomes right as soon as it is sanctioned by the people. The people even now give their sanction to many dreadful evils which are certainly destroying multitudes. Along with all this, many new forms of religion, with considerable followings, are also greatly assisting to undermine the moral foundations of society to-day. The crash is coming. Man, without God, cannot govern himself. How, then, will he govern others right, when democracy holds absolute sway?

What will happen then? Men must have leadership. A greater leader is yet to arise. Christ said that Him Who came in the name of His Father they would not receive, but when this one—Antichrist—will come in his own name, him they will receive. That they will do, for democracy will surely fail. What then? Every moral restraint in society will be thrown to the winds. The Great Tribulation will then be here!

Everything in the world is drifting in that direction. When ye see all these things know that He is near, even at the door. Be patient, brethren, for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. Before the full development of the evil, coming upon the world, every true believer will be caught away from the earth. My readers, are you ready? Are you watching? When ye think not, He will come.

CHAPTER XI.

The Sign of Mussolini

It is not now my intention to teach that Mussolini is the Antichrist. To be doing that would be going right against all my understanding of the Sacred Scriptures. We presently will see that it is not until after the redeemed Church has gone up to meet the Lord in the air, that the Man of Sin is to be revealed. Until then, it would therefore be sheer waste of time for anyone to seek to identify his startling personality. Many have tried to do it with invariably unhappy result. The Romish Pope has often been affirmed to be the Antichrist, so also, in his time, was the great Napoleon of France, while, in the early days of the Great War, the German Kaiser was as definitely averred to be the mighty one whose throne is to be from Satan.

It is just possible that much of this theorising, in regard to the Antichrist, has arisen through failure to distinguish between the spirit of Antichrist and his actual personality, as it is yet to be revealed, after the Church has been taken. In 1 John four and three we read: "Every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: AND THIS IS THAT SPIRIT OF ANTICHRIST, WHEREOF YE HAVE HEARD THAT IT SHOULD COME; AND EVEN NOW ALREADY IS IT IN THE WORLD."

What is here said can be understood by remembering what God in this Age is doing by the Holy Spirit through the preaching of the Gospel. He is visiting the nations to take out of them a people for His Name. (Acts, 15, 14.) By similar method, Satan, through the spirit of Antichrist, is preparing the world to receive the Son of Perdition, at the time of his revelation, after the Church is taken. The Spirit of God is now in every believer. It is the spirit of Antichrist

that is in the others. In this way we understand what John meant when he said: "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world." (1 John, 4: 4.)

The spirit of Antichrist is real. He is just as real and definite as is the Holy Spirit, Who is now working through the Gospel to bring men to God. It is through every false gospel, and every erroneous teaching, as well, that the spirit of Antichrist is preparing the way of the Evil One. As also was said by John: "Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is Antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son." (1 John, 2, 22.)

Again did the inspired pen write: "Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that Antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time." (1 John, 2, 18.)

So that we see, while Antichrist is yet to come, already are there many antichrists. That is, such are those who now deny the Father and the Son. They are antichrists, no matter what their position or standing. "Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also." Thus to deny the only begotten Son of God, as only Saviour and Lord, is to be an antichrist, and a preparer of the way for the terrible Antichrist who is yet to be revealed.

Thus is it plain why there have been so many vain guesses as to the identity of the Antichrist. The Apostle Paul makes it as clear as anything. "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only He Who now hinders will hinder, until He be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked One be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming." (2 Thes., 2: 7, 8.)

So then, what I am now seeking to do, is not to identify the present supreme Dictator of Italy, Mussolini, with Antichrist, but only to take him as a sign, in regard to the approaching end. This, I think, the very Scriptures, already presented, justify us in doing. These Scriptures indicate a long period of preparation, culminating in actual revelation. "The Mystery of Iniquity doth already work." "This is that spirit of Antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should

come; and even now already is it in the world." And as was noticed in our previous chapter, while for a long time there might not be much perceptible movement towards the ultimate climax, yet was it to be, that as the end draws near, everything is to form up with a rush, as it were. For instance, we have been told, that it is not until after the Church has been taken that the Man of Sin is to be revealed. This cannot mean that the Man of Sin is not to be here, in the world, before that revelation actually takes place. For, it is as a man he is to be revealed, and his manhood can only have been reached, as with all other men, through childhood and youth, and up from birth. Before his revelation takes place, he also must have attained to some position of distinct prominence. Certain conditions must have gathered around his life, and ultimately have brought him into the position where he is ready to receive his power, his throne and his authority from the Dragon. I mean this. If the coming of Christ and the rapture of the Church should happen at any time within the next ten years, say, then the Antichrist of necessity must now be somewhere in the world, and the circumstances of his life are already preparing him for his ultimate destiny. And it was distinctly in regard to His own Second Advent, our Lord said: "When ye shall see all these things, know that He is near, even at the doors." (Matt., 24, 33.) It is that is the reason why, I now ask you to consider Mussolini, as a sign, in regard to the nearness of the glorious event.

The Little Horn.

The first thing we have to do is to learn what the Scripture has to teach concerning this final Satanic manifestation. To do that, we have to go back again to where we left off, in the things that are there revealed, in his book, through the prophet Daniel. By the great image of Nebuchadnezzar's dream was made known the whole history of human government, to the close of what our Lord afterwards called "The Times of the Gentiles." At the end, world power would be found to have developed into ten kingdoms. Daniel very earnestly desired understanding concerning what then was to be. Then to him also was given a dream. The four winds strove upon the great sea. Four beasts came up out of the sea. That is the same number as of the metals that were in the great

image. One was like a lion and had eagle's wings. The other was like a bear, only raised at one side. The third was like a leopard, having on its back four wings like those of a fowl. The fourth had no name given to it, but was "dreadful, and terrible, and strong exceedingly." Everything therein said was just in precise harmony with Nebuchadnezzar's image right down to the toes, for the fourth beast had ten horns. The horns stood for the same as did the toes—ten kingdoms. Only something additional is revealed. Daniel says: "I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things." (Dan. 7-8.)

Now as the ten horns, like the ten toes of the image, stand for ten kings, then also the little horn, which Daniel saw, also stands for a king, only with a difference, for it is said that he had eyes like the eyes of a man and a mouth speaking great things. The fact is quite evident from the Divine interpretation given. "And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and another shall arise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings." (Dan., 7, 24.)

So that, in addition to those ten kings of the last days, another king is to arise, who in some way is to be different to all the others that have ever before been. The difference is explained in the things that are said of him. There is a significance in these that is well worth careful consideration. Among the things said of the little horn is, that his look was more stout than his fellows. That is, even in appearance he was different. He made war with the saints, and prevailed against them, until the Ancient of Days came, and the judgment was given to the saints of the Most High. He is to speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High. Also is it said, that he shall think to change times and laws. And the saints shall be given into his hand for a time and times and the dividing of time. It is not possible for me here to give any detailed description of all these things, as I have already done, in my book, called "The Times of the Nations." Suffice it now to mention, that in prophetic Scripture, a "time" stands

for one year, "times" for two years, half a time, or "the dividing of time," for half a year. So that, we at once see, that the whole period in which this king, called the little horn, is to do these things, extends over three and a half years, precisely the same length of time as is allotted to the consummation of the Great Tribulation period, which later has full description in the Book of Revelation.

Regarding the little horn, it is also at once evident, that he is the last king, immediately before the setting up of the kingdom, which the God of Heaven is going to establish on the earth, and which is never to end. Verses twenty-six and twenty-seven are very clear. "But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. And the kingdom and the dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him."

Everything thus said clearly shows the little horn is to be the last king this world will have, immediately preceding the setting up of the kingdom over which the saints are to reign with Christ. Did not the Apostle Paul also say, that we shall reign with Him, if we suffer with Him?

In another vision, given to Daniel, concerning the time of the end, a distinctly similar personality therein has full description. "And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up. And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper and practise and shall destroy the mighty and holy people. And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many." (Dan., 8: 23, 25.)

Now, everything there said, regarding this king of fierce countenance, is precisely what the Scriptures elsewhere have to say about the Antichrist. The first rider on the white horse, in the sixth chapter of the Book of Revelation, is to do precisely the same thing: "By peace he shall destroy many." In both of these descriptions, his end, also, is seen to be the same with that mentioned about the Beast of Revelation nineteen. Here it says: "He shall stand up

against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand." In verse eleven of chapter seven, Daniel says: "I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake: I beheld even till the Beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame." See how similar all that is to what John saw: "And the Beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles by him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the Beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone." (Rev., 19, 20.)

Again, when we come to the eleventh chapter of Daniel, we find, beginning with verse thirty-six, a description of what essentially seems to refer to precisely the same person: "And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done."

The indignation mentioned there is the same as the Great Tribulation, which our Lord shows is to immediately precede the Second Advent in glory, the events of which are disclosed in the Book of Revelation, and which culminate similarly with the opening of the heavens to the King of kings, and the casting of the Beast and the False Prophet into the Lake of Fire.

Back in the ninth chapter of Daniel, we are told of this Prince who is to come, making covenant with the Jews, he then is to find in Palestine. It is evident that the covenant, this prince, as he is then called, is to make, will have something to do with the stabilising of the Jewish religion. I am inclined to believe this will have to do with the inauguration of Temple services on the spot where now stands the Mahommedan Mosque of Omar. The angel tells Daniel, that the prince confirms the covenant with many of them for one week—that is, for seven years. But in the middle of the week he violates his covenant and causes the oblation and the sacrifice to cease, and, for what is called the overspreading of abominations, he is to make it desolate, until the consummation. That really is until the appearing of the Son of God through the opened heavens.

This prince is the same one our Lord referred to in Matt., 24, 15: "When ye therefore shall see the Abomination of Desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the Holy place," that is, in the Holy Place of the temple that will then have been raised at Jerusalem. Said the Lord, "Whoso readeth, let him understand: then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains."

This saying of our Lord's never yet has been fulfilled, as yet it is going to be. Verse 21 shows it is to be in the Great Tribulation, and the Great Tribulation is to be immediately followed by the appearing of Christ in glory. In the middle of the week, three and a half years before our glorious Lord comes forth through the opened heavens, this prince is to break his covenant with the Jews, and as was said by the Lord, he is to stand in the Holy Place. I really am inclined to think that this also may be the very time when this Man of Sin is to be revealed. He then is to take away the daily sacrifices which the Jews will by that time have come again to set up. He himself is to stand in the Holy Place, that is, apparently, to be worshipped. Really, the last message given of God, through Daniel, concerns that same abomination. "And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate is set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days"—that is, a little over three and a half years. (Dan. 12-11.)

We are, in a moment, to see how the New Testament precisely confirms all that here has been said, but before looking up that, it will be well to notice in Daniel 11: 37, what is there said, in regard to this marvellous personality. It is said of him: "Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god: for he shall magnify himself above all. But in his estate shall he honour the god of forces: and a god whom his fathers knew not shall he honour with gold and silver, and with precious stones, and pleasant things. Thus shall he do in a stronghold with a strange god, whom he shall acknowledge and increase with glory." (Dan., 11: 37, 39.) Then in verse forty-five, it is told how he is to establish his place in the Holy Land, in the glorious mountain, between the seas—that is, between the Mediterranean and the Dead Sea. The German Kaiser had

his very fine palace built, in the years before the war, on Mount Scopus, just close alongside the Mount of Olives. It would seem that in the coming time, the Antichrist is to build right on the top of the glorious mountain, on which the feet of our Lord are first to stand, when He again descends from Heaven.

The Man of Sin.

Many other Scriptures referring to the same terrific personality are found in the Old Testament, but sufficient have been given in regard to our present purpose. By looking up the things that are said of him in the New Testament, we are at once impressed with the harmony of expression in regard to all Divine Revelation. The Old and the New Testaments are one.

The second epistle to the Thessalonians is specially clear. The first chapter tells of what is to happen at Christ's appearing in glory. Christian people, even in Apostolic days, were falling headlong into error, because of false teachers, even then abounding, in regard to the Coming again of the Lord. Paul hastens to explain what had yet to be. "Let no man deceive you by any means; for that day" (that day is the day of the Lord after Christ will have taken away His people, as is described in 1 Thes., 4, 17), "shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that Man of Sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God."

You will see at once that this "Man of Sin" is to do exactly what God through Daniel made known that the "little horn" is surely going to do, and at precisely the same time. The Temple of God, here mentioned, is, very evidently, not St. Peter's Church at Rome, but it rather is the Temple of God, the Jews are again to set up at Jerusalem, and concerning which, as we have seen, the Lord said, the Abomination of Desolation is yet to stand up in the Holy Place. As already has been seen, this awful being, while apparently discarding all gods, is to bring in a quite new expression in regard to God, and will ultimately present himself as God, and as such will demand the worship of all men everywhere. He cannot now do that, neither can he be known, because

there is One that now restrains, and will continue to restrain until the time of his revelation and power has come. It is all that, Paul, very distinctly affirmed, when he said: "Remember ye not, that when I was yet with you, I told you these things. And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed IN HIS TIME. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only He Who now hinders will hinder, until He be taken out of the way."

There is no doubt whatever but that the hindering One, here mentioned, is the Holy Spirit of God, Who now works through born again believers. Such regenerated believers are all of them new creatures in Christ Jesus, and their bodies now are the temples of the Holy Ghost. The full manifestation of Satanic wickedness thus cannot be until the Holy Ghost is taken out of the way. That can only be, when the Lord descends from Heaven to receive His Church. The meeting then, is to be in the air, and from that wonderful moment, the Apostle affirms, "so shall we ever be with the Lord."

The Wicked One Described.

"And then shall that Wicked One be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming." That is at the actual appearing of the Lord, this Man of Sin is to be destroyed, and it is that every other Scripture shows is then to happen.

Then is more information given concerning this fearful personality. His "coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the Truth, that they might be saved."

So is it evident, that by then, the opportunity of salvation for all such Christ rejectors will have for ever passed. The whole true Church of God, saved through the Gospel of grace, will have gone up to be with the Lord. These others who received not the love of the Truth, are left to judgment. "And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the Truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

There would seem to be no doubt but that the great deceiver here is the same as the little horn of Daniel. Here he is called the Man of Sin, and is described as being the Son of Perdition. And as Jesus Christ said: "I am come in my Father's name, Me ye will not receive; if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive." With signs and lying wonders and actually by the working of Satan is he to deceive the Christ rejectors of that time. In a previous chapter, we have already seen how, with a rush, in regard to the recent influx into Christendom, of an astonishing variety of false religious cults, the Mystery of Iniquity seems now actually preparing those who now despise the Divine Gospel for what is surely coming.

He Ascends the Throne.

It is not till after the Church has left the earth it happens. Every Scripture we have looked at, has shown it. What we are now going to read, in Revelation thirteen, is conclusive. For it is back in the fourth and fifth chapters of the same book, the whole raptured Church is there seen in the Heavens with Christ. In chapter twelve, again is mentioned the length of time, during which, apparently, the Antichrist is able to work the fulness of his fearful will. As in Daniel, this is said to be "a time, times, and half a time." More than once, it is also shown to be "forty and two months," or "a thousand two hundred and three score days," the same period of time, in each case exactly. So that the Man of Sin is not to reign for long, but a fearful period of awful happening it surely is going to be. We see the harmony of the Revelation description with all we have learnt from Daniel. "And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a Beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the names of blasphemy. And the Beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority."

Now everything here said plainly indicates that the one thus called "The Beast" is none other than the little horn of Daniel. He rises out of the sea, which represents the revived Roman Empire, in its imperial form. The mention of the lion, the bear and the leopard, shows its identity with

the fourth beast in Daniel's vision. In prophetic Scripture, the dominion and its ruler are invariably identical. To Nebuchadnezzar, the prophet could say: "Thou art the head of gold, and after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee."

From Whence His Power?

"The Dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority." The Dragon is Satan. He once offered the kingdoms of this world to our Redeemer for one act of worship. The Beast is to accept what Christ refused. Compare what here is said about the Beast with what we have been told in Daniel about the little horn, and the harmony is clear. "There was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, and His tabernacle, and them that dwell in Heaven. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him." (Rev., 13.)

The saints here mentioned, and in Daniel, in precisely the same connection, are not the saints of the Church. They are the Hebrew saints, who are to go through the Great Tribulation. For by that time, all of the saints through Christ, will have gone from the earth, in the Rapture, that will then have already happened, Christ having before promised to keep all such from the hour of trial that then is to come upon all the world.

There are some good men who believe that not this beast is the Antichrist, but rather, the second one, called the false prophet. I can only say, that the more I am led to study all the circumstances, the more am I convinced that it is the First Beast who is the Antichrist. You will notice in verse fifteen of this thirteenth chapter, that it is the First Beast that all which dwell upon the earth are going to worship. It is not the second beast, called the False Prophet, the world then is to worship. It is the First Beast.

Our Lord, in Matt. 24, foretold that there should be false Christs and false prophets. The Second Beast is what the Scripture declares him to be, a false prophet. He is not

therefore the false Christ. What the false prophet does is to summon the world to the worship of the First Beast, and through him, the Dragon, just as the Blessed Holy Spirit now seeks the world to the worship of Christ and also through Him the Divine Father. It here also should be remembered that our Lord said, that the Antichrist was to come in his own name. This, the false prophet does not do; he comes in the name of the First Beast.

After History.

The people say: Who is able to make war with him? Daniel tells how "he will stand up against the Prince of Princes." Revelation nineteen describes the Beast at the head of the kings of the earth and their armies, gathered from all parts to make war against God's Christ, as He emerges through the opened heavens. Therein is harmony. Before this, he had led these armies in a final siege of Jerusalem. Many Old Testament Scriptures tell of the awful circumstance. Rev. 11 shows how he will kill the two witnesses that will then appear in Jerusalem, prophesying in the name of God. But his end will come speedily. It is of him, it is written: "Whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming." Revelation 19 shows how. "And the Beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the Beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with fire and brimstone.

The Sign.

My readers will see from all that now has been said, how unwise it would be to seek to identify any living person here on the earth, with the Antichrist. He is not to be revealed anyway, until after the One Who hinders is taken away.

So that for anyone to suggest the possibility of now revealing him, would be to make pretence of doing what now cannot be done, until after the Church has been caught up to be with the Lord. I am afraid some have brought the prophetic Scriptures into disrepute through vain attempts to identify him by his number, which is 666. But such

understanding cannot be possible until the time comes when the awful being is exercising his power throughout the earth.

But, having said all that, we are not hindered from looking for the beginnings, and the preliminaries, in regard to Antichrist, any more than we are in regard to other things, such as the renascence of Jewish nationality, and everything else as well. What the Lord said was: "When ye shall see all these things, know that He is near, even at the doors." A mighty host of God's dear people throughout the earth are now looking for the soon coming again of the Lord Jesus Christ. If He is coming soon, then the person who is to be ultimately revealed as the Antichrist is somewhere on the earth now. He must be preparing the way, and there must be a preparing of himself for the mighty position he is ultimately to fill. Not that he himself need now be aware of his terrific destiny. The Scriptures have shown us, that it is not until considerably after the Rapture of the Church to be with Christ, that the Antichrist enters upon his exalted position of world influence and power.

That was indeed an interesting incident, that has since been widely reported and very much commented upon. Rev. D. M. Panton had read a paper on the "Apocalypse of the Lord" before the Prophecy Investigation Society of London. Following upon the discussion that followed, Mr. Panton wrote: "As to Hell's anticipation of an imminent Advent, I can vouch for the following incident. An English Brigadier-General, at a dinner in Cairo, Egypt, in 1911, met an Indian Initiate who said to him, 'In the first week of August, 1914, a terrible struggle will break out in Europe.' They met again in Cairo in December, 1919, and the Indian remarked, 'What did I tell you, General? The fact was well known in occult circles in India and Tibet in 1911.' The General replied, 'What about the peace?' 'It is no peace at all,' replied the Initiate, 'it is a prolonged armistice.' 'What will happen?' asked the General. The answer was, 'There will break out a war to which the last was child's play.' Dates varying between 1925 and 1935 are given by occult leaders for the arrival of the god-emperor whom they already worship." The whole thing certainly holds a most startling suggestion. Mr. Panton vouches for the facts of

the incident, and as the world now approximates to the time, when what was said has to happen, in order to prove the prophecy true, we may well wait with deep interest the events of the next few years.

Mussolini.

What Mr. Panton has written of this amazing Italian statesman is certainly of an equally stirring character. He says with the incident just quoted: "Mussolini is either a remarkable understudy of the Seventh Emperor who is to come, or he is the man; and while probability points to his being an understudy, the fact thrills us to the soul that we cannot exclude the possibility of his being no less a personality than the Seventh Emperor. For in either case Mussolini is correctly acting the part in its initial stages. His avowed intention is the revival of the Roman Empire. 'We wish to render Rome great as it was in the Golden Age; all power for all Fascism: the goal is this—Empire.' The Empire is to be the old Rome of absolute autocracy. 'The rising faith must necessarily be intolerant and intransigent.' 'Fascism has already trodden, and if necessary will calmly tread again, on the more or less decaying corpse of the Goddess of Liberty.' He contemplates using the Vatican exactly as foretold. 'What an absurd mistake it would be to ignore such a moral power as that, a power two thousand years old and with an influence, daily increasing, over four hundred million souls.' ('Times,' Oct. 6, 1923.) He has no scruples even about Antichrist. 'I would enter into an alliance at this moment with the Devil himself, with Antichrist, if that would give this poor country tranquillity.' And blasphemy is already on his lips. 'If the eternal Father were to say to me, I am your friend, I would put up my fists to Him.' Whatever his destiny, Mussolini is a portent."

A Marvellous History.

The work this wonderful man has done is really extraordinary. Until October, 1922, Bolshevism was ravaging the whole of Italy. The nation was virtually at civil war. Industry was hopelessly paralysed and everything had been brought to chaos. Government had lost all effective authority and Parliament had come to be a feeble confusion of cliques. As was recently said by Viscount Rothermere,

"This was a supreme crisis not only for Italy, but for Europe. If the Bolshevists had succeeded, as then seemed inevitable, in establishing a Communist despotism in Western Europe, England, France and Germany would still have been suffering from that poisonous proximity."

Mussolini, then an unknown newspaper editor, rose up from his desk in Milan, organised a secret society known as "The Black Shirts," later as "The Fascisti," marched into Rome and became the most absolute Dictator of modern times. Mussolini has given to Italy what is universally recognised as being the most efficient government in the world. He is surely an absolute Dictator. He walks into Parliament and tells the people's representatives what they are to do. One of his first acts was to deprive all local communities of all self-autonomy. Even municipal governments have been abolished, and more recently still there has been dragooned through Parliament a measure, which the King has simply been forced to sign, and which absolutely wipes out every vestige of free elections, such as had come to operate in all democratic countries. This surely is the mingling of the iron in the clay all right and confirms Mussolini's own declaration that, "Fascism came to power by means of muskets and by means of muskets it will go."

Antichrist is to be a dictator who will recognise no law but his own, and the people will then be willing to have it so. Mussolini already is not very different in that respect, at anyrate. He is already known as "The Man of Mystery." As was said by the London Christian, "It becomes increasingly evident that Signor Mussolini is a man of mystery, operating in a set of circumstances that are full of omen." His policies are said to be shrouded in secrecy. Not anyone is taken into his counsel, not even the members of his Cabinet. None of his plans are made known until he himself decides to reveal them.

The London "Evening Standard" wrote of him: "Whatever his ultimate place in history, Benito Mussolini is unquestionably a most original and interesting man." This also was reported of him: "Twice recently Premier Mussolini, usually blunt and absolutely direct of utterance, has given Italy a mysterious phrase to conjure with, and speculation is now rife about a startling trump card which it is asserted the Fascist Dictator is prepared to play. The first

phrase, with its gathering echoes in political circles, is the veiled prediction of a new revolutionary act, contained in an interview printed in 'Ordine Fascisti,' in which Mussolini, referring to his opponents, said: 'At a certain point, some action will be taken which will stop all this noise, and this will be a new revolutionary act destined to complete the revolution and direct it toward its inexorable goal.' "

An Interesting Personality.

Mussolini certainly has a most interesting personality. He surely possesses the qualities that are likely to command the admiration of the people generally. Otherwise, he would never have reached his present exalted eminence. It is of him, Viscount Rothermere writes: "Each time I return to Italy I see fresh signs of persistent improvement. Mussolini himself sets an example of unceasing industry to his ministers and to the statesmen of every country. He is one of the hardest working men in the world. Besides being Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, he is Minister of War, of the Navy, and of the Air. He is also Minister of the Interior and head of the newly-formed Ministry of Corporations, or Fascist Trade Unions, as well.

"To that broad oak table of his in the corner of a vast room in the historic Palazzo Chigi—which with its lofty, painted roof, and the row of fixed seats, like choir stalls, that line its walls, has something of the air of a sacristy—are brought for his approval the reports and projects of almost every branch of the public life of the country. He sits there with nothing in front of him but the long list of the day's appointments, giving decisions on the manifold and complex questions that come up before him with extraordinary powers of memory and judgment. Very seldom does Mussolini need to call for the file of any State business which he has previously studied. 'Without a good memory, it is impossible to govern,' is one of his sayings, and at the end of the day he insists that his table shall be absolutely cleared, with no business whatever held over till the following morning. He takes no part whatever in social life. He sleeps eight hours a night. For ten years he has not taken a drop of alcohol, and he does not smoke."

The above description is certainly from the pen of one who is a very real admirer of the Italian statesman and also

suggests the very things that indicate the greatness of the man, and which are likely to command the admiration of the people as a whole. Here also is a description by another English admirer which likewise thrills with suggestion, specially for the Bible student. Lady Drummond Hay was granted an interview and wrote as follows: "I looked at him and said, 'Why do you work with Julius Caesar looking over your shoulder all the time?' " For in a little niche in the wall he had a bust of Julius Caesar. At this question, Lady Drummond says, "Mussolini's face took an inspired expression, his eyes a curious dreamy look, and his voice sounded strangely moved as he replied, almost reverently, 'He—he is my ideal, my master—Julius Caesar, the greatest man that ever lived!' " Now Julius Caesar took unto himself honors that belong to no man. He had a statue erected in a public place, in Rome, and put upon it the inscription, "To Caesar, the Demigod." I wonder should the opportunity offer, if Mussolini will do the same as was done by his ideal—Julius Caesar. That certainly is what is surely going to be done by the Beast. In his day, a great image is to be set up, which all the people will have to worship. It is of interest now to have before us, here, a recent news item: "Mussolini was revealed to-day as the owner of a heroic-sized bust of himself, displayed in the Grand Central galleries in an exhibition sponsored by the Italian Government. The statue is ten times life-size and on the Dictator's brow is carved the wreath of a Roman Emperor."

The newspaper man gives a portrait of the one who is now called "The Saviour of Italy," that even may have greater significance for us than the things already given in this special study. It was written in Rome. "Benito Mussolini is a man of great personal courage, immense capacity for work, magnificent organising ability and oratorical talents of the highest class. He is also blatant, vulgar and inordinately conceited; not so much wise as cunning; not so much strong as violent. He is in short a born revolutionary, who firmly believes in cold violence as an instrument of government, though he has sense enough to see that violence does not always pay. That this estimate is not exaggerated will be attested by all who have been privileged to see him in repose and in anger, or by a glance at the bewildering changes in his internal policy."

"I have been guilty of one great sin," says Signor Mussolini. "I have loved my country with an idolatrous love. We are repeating history in these days, the history of the Roman Caesars. Caesar! My great inspirer! I have his bust before me all the time." The astrology in which Imperial Rome was steeped has returned. "Mussolini," says Evangeline Adams, the foremost American astrologer and medium, "resembles Napoleon astonishingly: he never takes any decision without first consulting an astrologer." An iron Caesarism is forming once again. "On the walls of Rome," says Mr. Wickham Steed ("Review of Reviews," July, 1928), "are posted notices that, on the morrow of any mishap to the Fascist leader, 100,000 Italians will pay the penalty with their lives." A mine under the Monarchy may be sprung at any moment. By the new Constitution of the Grand Fascist Council it "must always be consulted on the succession to the Throne"; and "if the party in power," King Humbert said to Signor Giolitti a year ago, "wishes to drive me from the throne, I shall do nothing to prevent this." The revival of the Empire lies ahead, and there is only one possible Emperor.

The Great Ambition.

As already intimated, Mussolini's ultimate ideal is the revival of the ancient Roman Empire in all its former imperial dignity and glory. On the occasion of the 2677th anniversary of the founding of the Roman Empire, Senator Cremonesi, one of Mussolini's strong right-hand men, in the presence of Mussolini, and before a vast throng of the Italian people, said: "Rome must again become the radiant capital of the Latin world! Rome must again conquer the imperial dignity." Mussolini was said to be delighted. An Italian newspaper said: "A bloc of eighty million Romans from the Atlantic to the Mediterranean, under the mighty fist of Mussolini, will solve the hard and obscure problems of Europe. In a year France will be France again, a world collaborator to the eternal restoration of the glory that was Rome. And if the French people are destined to disappear despite our efforts to give it new blood, it will have the joy of fainting in the immortal arms which fondled it when young, not destroyed by barbarians, but absorbed in the immortal breast of Rome."

These are surely big words, but they are the only kind now permitted to be published in the Italian newspaper. Suppression has been the Mussolini judgment on those papers that did not harmonise with this, Italy's new ambition.

Plans are also under way to make Rome the proper capital city of the revived Empire. Said Mussolini: "Within five years, Rome must become the most wonderful city in the world in the eyes of all people of the globe. My ideas are clear, my orders are precise, and I am sure they will soon be transformed into concrete facts. Vast, well-ordered, powerful as in the days of the first empire of Augustus, Rome must again become the wonder of the whole world. The theatre of Marcellus, the Capitol and the Pantheon will soon have large squares around them. A wide street will be built between the Piazza Colona in the heart of the city and the Pantheon. The century-old monuments of our history must rear their imposing immensity in the necessary solitude. New houses, schools, public baths, gardens and playing grounds soon will be given to Rome's Fascist population."

They who deny the resurrection of Rome prophetically, would be hard put to it to deny it politically, said Mr. Panton. In 1860 a nation ruled by two kings, four grand dukes and a pope, suddenly solidified, became one of the Great Powers of Europe. Rome, with a population of 200,000 in 1870, now reaches a million, the population of the Rome of Augustus. Before the War Italy's merchant fleet came eighth on the world's list; in 1927 it occupied the fourth place in the world and the second in Europe. The whole of Italy is undergoing transformation. "Everywhere," says the "Times" (October 29, 1928), "buildings and monuments are rising, old roads are being relaid, new roads opened, gardens planted, squares enlarged, and whole quarters embellished. Every city has its Hausmann and its ambitious town-planning scheme; every city is extending, absorbing the neighboring communes, adding to its population, and being transformed."

Mussolini and the Church of Rome.

Though himself an avowed infidel, Mussolini, from the beginning, has been distinctly friendly towards the Romish Church. The priests were allowed to have Bibles burned

in the public squares. The crucifix, which had for long been banished from public places, was again replaced in the school-houses of Italy. A law was passed making religious teaching, which meant religion as taught by the priests, again compulsory in every public school in Italy. In our next chapter is to be considered the "Romish Church as a Sign." Then we shall be able to say more in regard to the most wonderful thing that has happened, in regard to Roman Catholicism, since 1870. As a preliminary, let me quote what was written by an American newspaper correspondent, a few years ago, who was then living at Rome: "Mussolini and the Pope have been negotiating for some time, with the utmost caution on both sides, for you may be sure there is very little confidence between them. The whole thing is a political bargain and barter. As far as the motives and statesmanship in the dealings are concerned, we may regard a horse trade as a lofty transaction in comparison. Mussolini wants to perpetuate his power; the Vatican wants to profit by his ambition. The Dictator feels that with the 'Black Shirt' militia and the support of the Pope he can crush any opposition that might threaten him hereafter. . . . The stage seems set for great events here, and the first gun may be sounded at any time. The details may still be undetermined, but there is no doubt that Mussolini is contemplating A GREAT BETRAYAL!"

Now, when we come to consider the seventeenth chapter of the Book of Revelation in connection with our present theme, we are going to see that it is just such a future religious condition that is there described. Mussolini has already done for the Romish Church what it is there stated Antichrist is to do for the Harlot System. The Pope is again among the sovereign rulers of the world, and more, at last reigns over independent territory. It is Mussolini that has done this for the Romish Church. And enough surely has here been given to show that, at least, we are abundantly justified in looking on Mussolini as a sign in regard to the near advent of our blessed Lord. What the Antichrist is going to do, Mussolini has surely begun to do. The former is going to have his image worshipped, so that we read: "And he caused all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: and that no man might buy or sell, save

he that had the mark, or the name of the Beast, or the number of his name." Mussolini is surely approximating very closely to that kind of thing. He has made it a law in Italy, that, "Whoever commits an act against the life, integrity or liberty of the Premier is punished with imprisonment from ten to twenty years, and if he succeeds in the attempt, with life imprisonment. Whoever, with words and acts, offends the Premier, is punished with imprisonment from six to thirty months and fined from 300 to 500 lire."

Mussolini even speaks big to the outside world. In a speech before the Italian Parliament in 1925, he said: "I will not menace any country, but in my capacity as chief of this Government, I warn the entire world."

Yes, Mussolini is surely a portent, a very mighty sign of the nearness of the end. As was said by an Italian peasant: "Mussolini may be a disaster, but he is more than a man." Just think! Suppose the Church soon suddenly rises from the earth to be with the Lord. Soon after, as God's Word surely tells is to be done, Satan, in some mysterious way, offers such a man the rule of the world, as formerly he did to God's Christ. Would he not fall to it? I think he surely will.

So then, my friends, Mussolini must be taken as a sign. The Lord is at hand. The time is right near. We must get ready. At any moment the Lord may descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then if we are now saved, we then who are alive and are remaining, shall then arise to meet Him in the air. Will you?

CHAPTER XII.

The Sign of the Roman Catholic Church.

"And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet color, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication." (Rev. 17: 4.)

The woman here so gorgeously described is a Church. The gold, the precious stones and the pearls are surely stated as marks of identity, and the cup in her hand as clearly indicates the climax of her sin.

Two Churches Only.

There are but two Churches that have recognition in the Divine Scriptures. Every kind of religion relates to either one or other of them. The one is the true Church of Jesus Christ, concerning which a wonderful thing is said: "Christ loved the Church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." The other Church is the one here called "the Great Harlot." Distinct description of it is given in this nineteenth chapter of the book of Revelation. It is of it the Apostle John says: "There came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hitherto; I will show unto thee the judgment of the Great Harlot that sitteth upon many waters." So that what is here, is a showing and an actual revealing of the False Church. That is, God would have us know what the False Church is through the identifying conditions that are here so clearly stated.

There is a similar showing in regard to the True Church. It is given concerning the marriage that is to take place in Heaven. It is stated that "to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints." (Rev. 19: 8.) From this aspect alone there is a great difference in regard to the two Churches.

Then, concerning earthly relationship and aspiration, the condition of each is seen to be as entirely different. The Great Harlot is said to sit upon many waters. "And he said unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the harlot sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues." (Rev. 17: 15.) So that what all this means is that the False Church is to be found sitting upon, that is, actually lording it over peoples and nations. And again is it said, that with her, "The kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication." (Verse 2.) So that this False Church is seen to be of the world, worldly, and temporal sovereignty is indicated as being its great and persistent ambition, and ultimate achievement.

On the other hand, the True Church is depicted as not being of this world at all. Concerning its members, the Lord definitely said: "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." And it was to every one of His own, the Divine declaration was given: "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." (John 15: 19.) So that in regard to worldly relationship, also, there is quite a sharp distinction between the two Churches. While the True Church is Divinely described as not being of the world at all, the harlot Church is depicted as "sitting upon a scarlet colored beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns." The scarlet colored beast with its ten horns, here mentioned, on which the harlot sits, is clearly that which stands for the government of this old world, in its last expression, as in our previous studies we have seen is surely going to be, in the latter days, immediately before the revelation of God's Blessed Son from Heaven. Everything that is here said, perfectly agrees with all other Scripture in this regard. So that, what is thus to be learned is that, just as

this Age is about to close, the False Church will again be found in the exercise of dominion over the nations. This thing is just as clear from God's Word as is the light of the day. But, before the complete culmination of what is thus surely going to be, those who have loved not the world, neither the things that are in the world, will have been caught right away to the Throne of God in Heaven. By then the Rapture will have happened, and be passed.

The Two Mysteries.

Both the True Church and the False Church are spoken of in the Scriptures as being mysteries, both in regard to their origin and being. In the epistle of Paul to the Ephesians the Church of God is described as being a great mystery. It is called "the Mystery of Christ," and there is a fellowship of the mystery, "which from the beginning of the world has been hid in God," but is now made known in regard to the Church as "the manifold wisdom of God." This is the mystery of the True Church. And while there is mystery in regard to its being, there is also deep mystery concerning those belonging to it. For every one of such has gone through the mystery of birth twice. All of them are twice born. They are born of the Spirit of God as well as having been born in the natural order. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." (John 3: 8.) Without this second birth our Lord said that no man could enter the Kingdom of God. It is the mystery of the Gospel through which, in this Dispensation of ours, men and women are being born a second time into new relationship to God. So that, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creation, old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new." (2 Cor. 5: 17.)

But, as we already have seen, "the Mystery of Iniquity doth already work." That is in order to pervert souls from the pure Gospel of Jesus Christ so that they may not be begotten again unto life eternal. Because people will not receive the love of the Truth that they might be saved, they are going to believe a lie. And the culmination of this awful perversion from the Truth of God is what we see in Revelation seventeen, in the Divine description given there

of the Great Harlot: "And upon her head was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH." All who have then been found to have rejected the Son of God as Saviour will then be found in association with this awful mystery.

Drunk With Blood.

It is really a startling thing that is said next: "I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus." What is this? It is the Divine description, of that which is here called the Great Harlot. It is the symbolic representation of the False Church, as opposed to the True Church, which presently the Lord is to take right away from the earth to be with Him for ever in glory.

What then is its name? How is this False Church to be known? Is it the Roman Catholic Church that is thus written about? I think it is, in one sense, at anyrate. We shall see how that, in its whole history, Roman Catholicism, in regard to the pure Gospel of the Grace of God, has filled out the awful picture, as nothing else in all that same time has done. Regarding the Papacy, the priesthood, its teaching about Purgatory, confession and penance, the Mass, and worship of the wafer, confession to the priest and man-arranged penances, the invocation of the so-called saints, in its teaching regarding extreme unction, and in many other things as well, the position of the Romish Church is entirely unscriptural and therefore false. What is here said of this awful thing called "MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT," has already been done in the past centuries by the Roman Catholic Church. The elders in the Church of God were never to be lords over God's heritage, but were simply to be ensamples to the flock. On the other hand, Rome, from the Pope down to the lowest in order of the priests, has ever lorded it over the people. On the day of his coronation, when tens of thousands prostrate themselves in the dust before him, the Pope is thus addressed:

"Receive the tiara adorned with three crowns, and know that thou art the Father of Princes and Kings, Ruler of the World, Vicar of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Reference must here be made to a ceremony that is known as "The Adoration of the Pope." It takes place in St. Peter's Church at Rome. The Pope-elect takes his seat on the high Altar. There is no higher seat in the Sanctuary. The assembled Cardinals and Bishops and people prostrate themselves before him; they yield to him Divine honors, and he accepts such as his right. Here is a newspaper description of what actually happened on August 11, 1903, when Pope Pius X. was duly enthroned at St. Peter's: "The Pope entered the basilica amid a flourish of silver trumpets, and the acclamations of the vast congregation assembled. . . . Then after signalling for silence the Pope pronounced a benediction on the multitude kneeling before him. The Pope then ascended the throne, and when he was seated 'received the act of obedience from the high Church dignitaries in the order of their rank—the Cardinals kissed his feet, knees and face, the Bishops his foot and knee, and the lesser dignitaries his foot only. The new Pope then celebrated the Mass, and at the moment of elevation a blare of silver trumpets resounded from the top cupola of the chapel, the troops and people kneeling meanwhile."

In his "Vatican Decrees," Mr. W. E. Gladstone wrote: "Rome requires a convert who now joins her to forfeit his moral and mental freedom, and to place his loyalty and civil duty at the mercy of another." And in his "Vaticanism" the same writer affirmed, concerning the amazing presumptions of Roman Catholicism: "She alone arrogates to herself the right to speak to the State, not as a subject, but as a superior; not as pleading the right of a conscience staggered by the fear of sin, but as a vast incorporation setting up a rival law against the State in the State's own domain, and claiming for it, with a higher sanction, the title to similar coercive means of enforcement." "Individual servitude, however abject, will not satisfy the party now dominant in the Latin Church."

Mr. W. E. H. Lecky, the historian, has expressed precisely the same thing when in this connection he wrote: "The Catholic Church is essentially a State within a State, with its frontiers, its policy, and its leaders entirely distinct from those of the nation, and it can command an enthusiasm and a devotion at least as powerful and as widespread as the enthusiasm of patriotism. It claims to be a higher

authority than the State, to exercise a Divine, and therefore, a supreme, authority over beliefs, morals, and education, and to possess the right of defining the limits of its own authority."

Such is not the opinion only of men antagonistic to Rome's unholy assumptions. Thomas Aquinas, frankly confessing Rome's unceasing determination in regard to world rule, says: "The Church of Rome is one monarchy over all the kingdoms of the earth, and is, among temporal kingdoms, as the mind or soul in the body of a man, or as God in the world. . . . Therefore, the Church of Rome must not only have all spiritual power, but also the supreme power." And Pope Leo XIII. declared, on November 1, 1885, that "The Pope has supreme authority, spiritual and temporal, over all societies, and has the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, and has a supreme, legislative, judicial, and coercive authority in both spheres." Cardinal Manning's declaration is as lucidly decisive in the same connection: "If an heretical prince is elected or succeeds to the throne, the Church has a right to say, 'I annul the election,' or 'I forbid the succession.'" A priest of humbler rank, Father Phelan, intimated in the "Westminster Watchman," that: "If the Government of the United States were at war with the Church, we would say to-morrow, 'To hell with the Government of the United States'; and if the Church and all the Governments of the world were at war, we would say, 'To hell with all the Governments of the world.'" A straightout and quite characteristic and priestly announcement is this, surely.

Dr. Hatch has said, concerning the framework of the Roman Church, that it "is so completely a survival of the Roman administration of the West, that even if no other outlines of that administration remained, they could be recovered by tracing those of the ecclesiastical organisation of the Middle Ages." The College of Cardinals is actually the perpetuating of the Roman Senate. The Pope was granted Royal honors, and in fact became the maker of kings. From the day when (in A.D. 800) Leo III. crowned Charlemagne in St. Peter's, then began the Holy Roman Empire, "and the Church then ascended the throne of world power. The harlot sat upon many waters, and the waters are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues."

And there is no difference now. For Rome's ambassadors, called "Nuncios," are at every royal court, carrying on ceaseless intrigue with the ordinary diplomatic weapons of this world, all with but one objective in view, the resumption of temporal power by the Church.

The Vatican is the largest palace in the world. It has eleven hundred rooms, and thirty-six courts, and together with St. Peter's, was erected at a cost of nine millions sterling, and requires for its upkeep an annual budget of a quarter of a million, with an income for the Pope of £20,000 a year. On his coronation, as already stated, the Pope is told, as he assumes the tiara, "Know thyself to be father of kings and princes, **the ruler of the world.**" It holds sway, along with the Greek Church, over a population of four hundred million people.

So that in regard to its unsleeping struggle to have world mastery, Roman Catholicism is as far away from the Church our Lord spoke about, when He said that its members were no more of this world than was He himself, as can well be imagined. Like the Great Harlot of Revelation seventeen, the Romish Church sits upon many waters, and with her the kings of the earth, already, have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunken with the wine of her fornication.

The Blood of the Martyrs.

What was it made rivers of red martyr blood to flow during what is now called the Dark Ages of Christianity? People are now forgetting, but it was the Roman Catholic Church that set up the Inquisition, instigated the massacre of St. Bartholomew, and directly or indirectly is said to have been responsible for the killing of, at least, fifty millions of Christian people for no crime whatever but their earnest devotion to Christ.

In Spain alone it has been proved by the careful statistical investigations of Llorente, a former secretary of the Inquisition, that between the years 1481 and 1808 A.D. over 341,000 persons were condemned by the Inquisition, of whom 31,912 were burned alive, and nearly 300,000 were tortured and condemned to severe penalties.

Rome's Savage Methods.

A writer recently relates how "in 1400, Inquisitors, with armed forces, broke into the Vaudois valleys, and fell, without notice, on the little community, pillaging, massacring, burning men, women and children, in the hope of exterminating them. Their savagery failed, but the crusades were renewed again and again, and each occasion with increasing violence and ferocity. They were always defeated, until at last, in 1655, the Waldenses were served as the Belgians were in 1914. A treaty made with them was broken. They were surprised, invaded, massacred, rooted out of their valley homes, and scattered in Switzerland. The horrors of this persecution are too awful for description. Infants were torn asunder limb by limb, and thrown down the rocks with their mothers after them. The sick and the old were burnt alive. Men were maimed, flayed alive, roasted, disembowelled, fastened down in the furrows of their own fields and ploughed into the soil like manure; others were buried alive. Fathers were led to execution with the heads of their own sons suspended from their necks! Other atrocities there, were too fiendish and disgusting to be recorded, deeds that Nero would have shuddered at, deeds that only Romanism could devise, deeds that make us ashamed of human nature.

"And yet they failed. The Vaudois returned to their valleys, and once and again they defeated their enemies, as they had often done before—a mere handful against a host. Their valor was a miracle, and their success out of all proportion to their means and their numbers. Large and well-equipped armies from Italy and France were overcome, driven back, annihilated. Their victories seem incredible, and almost read like fairy tales, until at length European pressure put a stop to the malignant onslaughts, and the Waldenses were left to dwell in their valleys, where they are to-day.

After the Reformation in Europe, there were godly men in the Church of England who never hesitated to freely express themselves in regard to Rome's idolatries. Speaking of verse two in Revelation seventeen, Bishop Hooker said of the Roman Catholic Church: "She hath fawned upon Kings and Princes, and by spiritual cozenage hath made them sell their lawful authority for empty titles." Bishop

Wordsworth on the same subject also said: "She has caressed and cajoled them with amatory gifts of flowers, pictures and trinkets, beads and relics, crucifixes and Agnus Deis, and consecrated plumes and banners. She has drenched and drugged their senses with love potions of bewitching smiles and fascinating words; and thus beguiled them of their faith, their courage and their power. Like another Delilah, she has made the Samsons of this world to sleep softly in her lap, and then she has shorn them of their strength. She has captivated, and still captivates, the affections of her Prelates and Clergy, by entangling them in the strong and subtle meshes of oaths of vassalage to herself, and has thus stolen the hearts of subjects from their Sovereigns, and has made Kings to hang upon her lips for the loyalty of her people; and so in her dream of Empire she has made the World a fief of Rome."

I am afraid there are not now many preachers in the Anglican Church who are likely to speak after this fashion. The tendency is all the other way. But this also is a sign of the times.

Purple and Scarlet Color.

"The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls."

On this clear statement, Bishop Wordsworth draws attention to the official "Book of Sacred Ceremonies" of the Church of Rome. Describing the enthronement of the Pope, here is what it says: "The Pontiff elect is conducted to the Sacrarium, and divested of his ordinary attire, and is clad in Papal robes." Now see! The colour of these is then minutely described. Suffice it to say, that five different articles of dress, in which he is then arrayed, are Scarlet. Another vest is specified, and this is covered with pearls. His mitre is then mentioned; and this is adorned with precious stones.

In the great cathedrals can be found rich treasures of gold, silver, pearls and other precious things. In the Church of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem also is to be seen vast wealth hanging over the unconscious image of the Virgin Mary, consisting of innumerable precious stones and other such things.

So that there should be no difficulty in locating to which Church such colours belong.

Then the book of "Sacred Ceremonies" goes on to describe what happens: "The Pope rises, and wearing his mitre, is lifted up by the Cardinals, and is placed by them upon the Altar—to sit there. One of the Bishops kneels, and begins the 'Te Deum.' In the meantime the Cardinals kiss the feet and hands and face of the Pope." It is then that such dreadful words as these are spoken to the newly-enthroned Pope. In them he is actually worshipped: "Most Holy and Blessed Father, Head of the Church, RULER OF THE WORLD, to whom the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven are committed, whom the Angels revere, and whom the gates of Hell fear, and whom all the World adores, we specially venerate, worship, and adore thee, and commit ourselves, and all that belongs to us, to thy paternal and more than divine disposal." As Wordsworth said: "What more could be said to Almighty God Himself?"

The Mass.

The great central feature of all Roman Catholic worship is the Mass, in which it is taught that at a certain moment, through office of its priest, literal bread and wine are changed into the real, actual body and blood of our Saviour Jesus Christ, so that these elements are again offered on each occasion as a propitiatory sacrifice to God on the behalf of both the living and the dead. This is a very long way from what happened, on the night of the betrayal, when our Lord gave the bread and the wine to His disciples, saying: "This do in remembrance of me, for as oft as ye eat this bread and drink this wine, ye do shew the Lord's death, until He come." In the Mass, the bread is actually worshipped as if it were God, and the people are exhorted to frequent observance, as by doing it they are being made right with God. Though too often their lives indicate their far separation from their Maker. The worship of bread, or of any other material such as wood or stone, or gold or silver, is rank idolatry, no matter what the pretence associated with it. And no sin more fearful ever aroused the wrath of God. The Divine instruction is always clear. Every idol was to be burnt with fire, and even the gold and silver upon it was not to be touched. (Deut. 7: 25.) No

idol was to be brought into a house, "Lest thou be a cursed thing like it." (Deut. 7: 26.) The man who made idols, though possibly not an idolater himself, was nevertheless laid under the Divine curse. (Deut. 27: 15.) The idolater was to be stoned to death, and here also is a startling circumstance. The first stones were to be actually thrown by the offender's own closest intimates and relatives. This was to show that they had had nothing to do with the man's idolatry. (Deut. 13: 9.)

The city in which idolatry had broken out was to be completely erased from the earth; its people had to be put to death and everything it contained, even to the cattle, had to be burned, and no city built just there again. (Deut. 13: 15.) Concerning the idol, God had caused His abhorrence of it to be carefully written: "Thou shalt utterly detest it, and thou shalt utterly abhor it; for it is an accursed thing." (Deut. 7: 26.)

What does all of this mean, but that the worship of idols of any kind whatever is absolutely abhorrent to God? The Divine Being never changes. And it was the God, Who is made known through the Bible, Who caused these terrific denunciations in regard to idolatry to be written. No man could ever have conceived such expression, as is there, in regard to idols. Why should anyone, apart from God, want to say such things anyway?

Now the Roman Catholic Church and the Greek Catholic Church, as well, all prostrate themselves before something that to them takes the place of God. You have only to visit any such Church, during Mass, to see the whole people going down low before a piece of bread, or before a picture, or something else. The Rev. D. M. Panton draws attention to a recent charge levelled against the Roman Catholic Church by the Dean of St. Paul's Cathedral, London, Dr. Inge. He said: "In the Western Catholic Church idolatry reigns almost unchecked. It is quite impossible to draw any distinction between the devotions paid before images by Catholics, and the idolatry against which the Jewish prophets fulminated." Moreover, he said, "naked fetishism, in the form of adoration of the consecrated elements, has been allowed to creep in."

This was a definite charge against the Roman Church. What kind of answer was there to give? The official answer

of the Roman Church was given by a Jesuit priest, Father Francis Woodlock, of Farm-street, London. You will notice that in it there is not the least appeal to the Sacred Scripture. The Jesuit rather quotes "the Catechism of the Council of Trent, a book (he says) which is the basis of all national Catechisms throughout the Catholic world. "Question: In what way can God be offended by images? Answer: Mainly in two ways. The one, if idols and images are worshipped as gods, or if it is believed that there is in them any divinity or virtue on account of which they are to be worshipped, or that anything is to be asked of them, or faith put in the images themselves. In other words, so long as we worship, not the wood or stone, but only the Deity, or the Virgin in the stone and beyond the stone, there is no idolatry." Said Father Woodlock: "No Catholic anywhere in the world prays to a statue; he prays before it, to help fix wandering thoughts on those whom the Virgin represents."

This is very subtle reasoning on the part of the priest, but it is nevertheless idolatry he is defending, when, as he says: "It is the Deity in the stone and beyond the stone," the Catholic worships. As appears, from the words of the Seventh General Council, when image worship in the Romish Chuch was established in 787 A.D.: "The honor paid to the image passes to the prototype; and he who adores the image adores in it the being or object portrayed."

Now, in the Mass, Rome asserts, not that the wafer used is an image of Christ, but that the wafer is Christ Himself, and that in worshipping the bread it is the Lord that is thus worshipped. There can be no mistake about this, for Father Woodlock said: "There is no fetishism, or idolatry, in the Catholic attitude towards the Blessed Sacrament, which **Catholics believe to be really and substantially Jesus Christ Himself.**"

Quite so! That is plain idolatry. Not any heathen in the world actually ocnsiders that it is the image itself he worships, any more than does the Roman Catholic in regard to the image of Mary. As the Apostle Paul said: "We know that an idol is nothing in the world." Then why set it up, as the priest says, to fix wandering thoughts?

A very distinguished man of Science, Dr. St. George Mivart, a member of the Roman Catholic Church, in an

article which he had published in the "Nineteenth Century Magazine" of January, 1900, reported on a certain question which had been, of his own knowledge, put to Roman Catholic authorities: "Since some attributes of the Deity may not unfitly be represented by pagan gods such as Jupiter, Athene, Aphrodite, and Pan, is it lawful for me, as a Catholic, to worship God as Jupiter or Athene if I am in truth devoutly moved so to adore him?" The answer given to this question, by four separate learned and devout priests, was this: "Most certainly it is lawful for you so to do, provided it helps you to advance in virtue and religion. But you must only do it privately: it would not at present be right for you to carry on a public worship of that kind."

The second commandment is clear against such idolatry and settles the whole question for ever. This is what God said: "Thou shalt not make unto thee a graven image, nor the likeness of any form that is in Heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath: THOU SHALT NOT BOW THYSELF DOWN BEFORE THEM." The words of the great God are as clear and precise as anything can ever be: "Neither shalt thou set up any image which the Lord thy God hateth." (Deut. 16: 22.) Enter any Romish Church and images will be found everywhere. God said: "Thou shalt not set up any image." The Roman Church does it. So then, for whatever purpose the image is set up, its meaning is idolatry.

Babylon.

Now considering all of these things, just mentioned, is it at all any wonder that understanding Christians have come to look upon Roman Catholicism as being, at least, included in the Great Harlot of Revelation seventeen?

And it is here we have also to notice, that the symbol represents something even bigger than Rome. There are two features that stand out very clearly in this regard. The first is the name given to it, and the second is what it stands for. The name is Babylon, and what Babylon is, is clearly described. She is the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth. Now "harlots" here means false systems of religion, and "abominations" always refers to the doctrines associated with apostate religions. So that this awful thing called MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, is clearly the

mother of all religion that is false. It is therefore evident that this mother of harlots and abominations of the earth is older even than Pagan Rome, and the title here given takes us away back to the beginning of all false religion. The name "Babylon" stands for a city, and God's Word clearly shows that it was in that very city that all idolatry originated.

Nimrod the Hunter of Souls.

The tenth chapter of the book of Genesis is one of the most wonderful in all the Bible. In it, there is stated the beginning of many of this world's mightiest movements. In verse eight we read that Noah's grandson, Cush, begat Nimrod, of whom it goes on to say that "he began to be a mighty one in the earth." Again is repeated the peculiar description: "He was a mighty hunter before the Lord: Wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the Lord."

This is certainly very strange. Can it mean that the inspired writer desires us to know that this Nimrod was a successful sportsman, so that in the hunt he could kill many animals? Hardly so! This Nimrod was really a startling personality. We find him referred to in the literature of the early nations as being the leader of all false religion from the beginning.

The Targum of Jonathan, an ancient Jewish commentary, explains that this "Nimrod was a mighty rebel before the Lord." While the Jewish Targum says that "Nimrod was mighty in sin, lying in wait to catch and overthrow men, and drawing them away from the worship of the true God." Hence his name became a proverb as being a great rebel and apostate. He headed a mighty religious apostasy, which ultimately developed into the false church, with branches reaching out into every land.

Then are we told, that the beginning of Nimrod's kingdom was Babel. It was in this city, Babel, or Babylon, as it afterwards was called, its people said: "Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto Heaven; and let us make us a name."

What did this mean, but the inauguration of a new way to that of Noah, which was through the blood of sacrifice, of reaching Heaven? Then came the scattering of the people abroad, and the ultimate confusion of speech, but for thou-

sands of years the city itself continued as the centre of the great Pagan religious mysteries, so that in the Scriptures, whenever Babylon is mentioned, it is usually in distinct connection with false religion. Is that not the reason why the prophet Jeremiah, long before the beginning of this Christian era, said something similar regarding Babylon to what is now before us in Revelation seventeen? "Babylon hath been a golden cup in the Lord's hand, that made all the earth drunken: the nations have drunken of her wine; therefore the nations are mad." (Jer. 51: 7.) It has been said that it was from Egypt came the ancient mysteries in regard to religion. But the Egyptians received them from India, where they had been brought by the Aryans, who came originally from Babylonia. When unbelievers quote the ancient Chaldean legends against the Bible they are only affirming the truth of the Bible, for it is in the blessed Book we have the real story of how these all originated. It was yonder in the city of Babylon began the strange religious mysteries that afterwards spread out over the whole earth.

Wickedness in Regard to Worship.

The common origin of all false religion is seen everywhere among the world's peoples. There is similar wickedness in all. A quotation from Augustine will give us just a glimpse of what was a feature of all early Pagan religion. By this also is it seen how that long before the Roman Catholic Church came into power, there was the worship of a virgin, along with which was invariably associated the most diabolical wickedness. Augustine tells how that, "In front of the Virgin's very shrine, where we used to contemplate her celebrated image, there, amid the general crowd that flocked together from all quarters, we were accustomed to gaze with the keenest interest on the shows that were going on, beholding, as we turned from one side to the other, here a solemn procession of harlots, there the Virgin Goddess. She was adored with supplication, while disgraceful ceremonies were being performed before her. There we saw no shamefaced mimes, no too-modest actress; all the requirements of the abominable rights were supplied to the minutest particular. One was soon made to know what was pleasing to the Virgin Deity, and the show was such that even the matron had learned something new when she re-

turned home from the temple. Some of the discreet women did, indeed, turn away their face from the lascivious motions of the actors, and learned the art of wickedness by means of side glances, for a feeling of shame in the presence of men restrained them from daring to look boldly on the lewd gestures. Yet still more powerfully were they restrained from daring to condemn with chaste mind the rites of the goddess whom they were adoring."

Not another word regarding the awful wickedness invariably associated with such Pagan worship can here be given. But enough has been inserted to offer explanation, regarding why the Apostle Paul speaks of the "cup of devils" and why he also spoke of all such worship as having to do with devils, and also why such terrific language is used in the seventeenth chapter of the book of Revelation: "MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH."

Here is another significant feature. Not only were the same kind of things practised in all of these ancient false religions, but they also had many of the same features as came ultimately to have a place in the Roman Catholic religion. All of them had their different orders of priests connected with them. There were also the so-called virgins belonging to the temples. The degrading rites, mentioned by Augustine, were openly practised to the accompaniment and the chanting of sensuous music, and the offering of incense. There also on the altars were to be seen the candles that were afterwards brought into Roman Catholicism. These Pagan religions, at the same time, had their "saints." their "bishops," the "Mass," "the tonsure," and the worship of images, as now is seen.

How Paganism Came Into Christianity.

What is now to be said I have fully shown in my book called "Studies in the Book of Revelation." Suffice it here to mention that what actually happened in regard to Christianity, explains what the Lord from Heaven said in addressing the Church at Pergamos: "Thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is." When the Medo-Persian army captured Babylon we are told that the leader of the Ancient Mysteries fled to Pergamum and made that city his head-

quarters, and its king Pontifex Maximus. Hence the reference in Rev. 2: 7 to Satan's seat being there.

But Attalus II., the last of the priest kings, died about 133 B.C., and bequeathed his royal and priestly offices, together with all his dominions and vast wealth, to the citizens of Rome. At that time, however, there was no King nor Emperor of the Roman Empire, for the Republic was not then overthrown.

A century later, Julius Caesar, previously invested Pontifex Maximus, or supreme Pope of the Roman religion, became Emperor. He immediately gave it out that he was the son of Venus, and caused himself to be deified, with the title of Divius Julius, or the god Julius. And from that time, the title of Divius, or god, was prefixed to the name of all the successive Emperors, who were regarded in the direct line of Babylon Superior Pontiffs. So that Rome in the early days of Christianity had already become the centre of the Babylon Mysteries. Then with the decay of the Roman Empire, a new power appeared, the Roman Catholic Church.

Have you ever wondered why the head of the Roman Church is called Pope, Pontifex Maximus? This is the explanation. Paul wrote: "The Mystery of Iniquity doth already work." Even so was it with Rome. For when the enemies of Christianity could not destroy the new religion by force they adopted other tactics, and ultimately captured the Church by flatteries. The priests came into Christianity in large numbers, the various orders were set up, the old images receiving new names were called "saints," and were established for worship, and the head priest became Pontifex Maximus. And that awful system called "the Church" came into being.

Then followed the dark ages, when the people were denied the use of the Bible for themselves, and through which the nations ultimately came under the complete thraldom of the priest, and there was fully developed that amazing universal system called the Roman Catholic Church. One or two quotations from John Henry Newman, who, strange to say, afterwards joined this Church and became one of its Cardinals, will be sufficient to indicate how he formerly viewed it, and also expresses how this religious system was generally viewed by the Reformers: "In the corrupt Papal system we have the very cruelty, the craft, and the ambition

of the Republic; its cruelty in its unsparing sacrifice of the happiness and virtue of individuals to a phantom of public expediency, in its forced celibacy within, and its persecutions without; its craft in its falsehoods, its deceitful deeds, and lying wonders; and its grasping ambition in the very structure of its polity, in its assumption of universal dominion. Old Rome is still alive; nowhere have its eagles lighted but it still claims the sovereignty under another pretence. The Roman Church I will not blame—but pity. She is, as I have said, spell-bound, as if by an evil spirit; she is in thraldom."

Then later on, in the year 1838, in his lectures on "Romanism and Popular Protestantism," he said, of the Church of Rome: "In truth, she is a Church beside herself, abounding in noble gifts and rightful titles, but unable to use them religiously; crafty obstinate, wilful, malicious, cruel, unnatural, as madmen are. Or, rather she may be said to resemble a demoniac possessed with principles thoughts and tendencies not her own. . . . Thus she is her real self only in name, and till God vouchsafe to restore her we must treat her as if she were that evil one which governs her."

The Reformation.

It may be of value here to quote what Luther said, in his famous "Babylonish Captivity of the Church." It shows this great Christian's belief in regard to the identity of Roman Catholicism with Babylon and Nimrod. He said:

"Whether I will or not, I daily become more learned, spurred on as I am by so many celebrated masters. Two years ago I attacked indulgences. But with so much fear and indecision, that I am now ashamed of it. But, after all, the mode of attack is not to be wondered at, for I have nobody who would help me to roll a stone. . . . I denied that the papacy is of God, but I granted that it had the authority of man; now after reading all the subtleties by which these sparks prop up their idol, I know that the papacy is only the kingdom of Babylon and the tyranny of the great hunter Nimrod. I therefore beg all my friends and all booksellers to burn the books which I wrote on this subject, and to substitute for them the single proposition: 'The papacy is a general chase, by command of the Roman pontiff, for the purpose of running down and destroying souls.'"

Through the earnest effort of godly men like Luther, the Reformation came, and many of the kingdoms of the earth threw aside the yoke of the Roman Catholic Church. The Bible, God's Word, was again put into the hands of the people. Once more did the sound of the Gospel go out to the ends of the earth. Everywhere did the preacher stand up to proclaim salvation alone by faith in the finished redemption of Jesus Christ. Multitudes of souls came into the salvation of God, and mighty organisations everywhere sprang into being for the spiritual uplift of humanity. Divine Truth came to be heard in the highways and byways of the earth. Through the printing press, the clear message from God to man was made available for everybody. But such a condition was not to maintain for ever. The time had to come, when would apply the words of the Lord spoken from Heaven: "Thou hast a name to live, but art dead." The inspired writer had made it known, how "The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the Truth, and shall be turned unto fables."

That time has now come. Preachers in the so-called Protestant Churches of the Reformation now openly deny the very Word of God on which, alone, the Protestant Reformation was based. Had the Reformers believed about the Bible, that which is now being openly taught in many of the colleges and churches, then had there never been any Reformation. It was because of the authority of God's Word, and on that sure foundation alone, the whole movement was based. Now, because the Bible by the preachers is being made a sort of a laughing stock for all kinds of infidelity, everything that was gained by the Reformation is again being lost, and the Roman Church seems again fast coming into power. In Luther's own country, Germany, there are to-day millions of devout Roman Catholics. Austria is Roman Catholic through and through.

Everywhere in England, the priest has become a mighty power. Roman Catholic churches and chapels are filled to overflowing. Converts from the Church of England are going over to Rome every day, for England's State Church has now become the nursing mother for Rome. The majority of its bishops and clergy now practically accept the

leading features of Roman Catholicism. In London, as here in Australia, can again be seen the triumphant procession of Rome's hierarchy, miles long, with the priests bearing aloft the sacred symbols, while multitudes of the people prostrate themselves on the streets in the worship of them. Less than one hundred years ago, there were not more than 50,000 Roman Catholics in the United States; now there are between twenty and thirty millions, and no other Church exercises a mightier political influence.

Dean Inge has lately said that in America the Roman Catholic Church exercises a power out of all proportion to its numbers; it holds the press by the throat; no American editor dares to expose the plots and the tyranny of the Church. One of the chief American lawyers was asked quite lately why he did not reveal a flagrant case of injustice perpetrated by the Romanists. "I dare not," he replied; "they would ruin me."

At Montreal, nearly one-third of the house property is said to belong to the Roman Catholic Church. It is also said that it pays no taxes whatever on this property. In the Great War, the priests resolved to stop recruiting in Canada, which they did so effectively that only 16,000 out of two million French-Canadians responded to the double call of France and England, which call was obeyed by 350,000 British-Canadians. In every country now, the Roman Catholic Church is a mighty power with which every Government now has to reckon. As was said by Dr. Inge: "The Roman Catholic Church can make hard bargains with politicians, to whom its chiefs come with a large parcel of safe votes in their hands. The Church humbled Prince Bismarck in the 'Kultur Kampf'; it foiled his policy in Poland; it turned Ireland into a rodent ulcer, poisoning the political life of Great Britain; it largely directs the cynical foreign policy (not the domestic policy) of France; in Italy, Spain and Belgium it is one of the chief forces the Government has to reckon."

On the League of Nations, which itself is another significant sign of the times in regard to the near coming of the Lord, the Roman Catholic Church now has a preponderating number of votes.

Protestantism and Romanism Contrasted.

Dr. I. M. Haldeman of New York gave out a statement that shows up the differences clearly between the Roman Catholic Church and those of modern Protestantism, and which also denotes plainly why it is that Romanism is winning out all along the line, especially in our so-called Protestant countries. He said: "While Protestantism is at war with itself—is full of treason to the Holy Scripture, and is breaking up into new and more absurd denominational factions every day—Rome, systematically, unrelentingly, and yet smoothly, secretly, and without noise, is marching to her destined place.

"Protestantism lifts up the banner of guess, of doubt, of dethroned authority, and stands insistently for organised uncertainty. Rome speaks with certainty, with authority and relentless fixity.

"Protestantism seeks favor of the unbelieving world, apologises for her creeds, and would establish herself by denying them. Rome hurls anathema at the unbeliever, magnifies her office and claims to be wholly divine.

"Protestantism builds schools, and endows universities, that she may teach the rising generation to reckon doubt as the beginning of wisdom, and unbelief as the sign-patent of knowledge. Romanism spends her wealth in establishing schools and institutions of learning that she may lay hold of the rising youth and teach them that the Church is the symbol of God, and that the highest wisdom is to obey her commands. . . .

"Protestantism prides itself on the denial of miracles. Romanism claims to work them."

The Roman Church is gaining strength and power continually, while in many regards the condition of the Protestant Church is sadly pitiable. There are often being brought under my own notice conditions in regard to many of the Churches that might well make our eyelids red with weeping. Perhaps one instance of a kind that is now becoming terribly common will be enough. It is only referred to because it provides a terrible illustration of the low condition to which Churches of the Reformation, of glorious memory, have now fallen. The entertainment was given by the Presbyterian Ladies' Guild, in the local theatre, which, though the weather was unpleasant, was crowded. The news-

paper report says that the first part of the programme comprised a pierrot entertainment of exceptional merit in which over thirty ladies and five men gave a delightful display. The bevy of ladies looked charming in their pink and black frocks, wide black hats and black and white ruffles. The men folk wore suits of a similar color. The staging was excellent and the lighting effects added considerably to the enjoyment of the performance, which went with a swing from start to finish.

All sorts of items were given. One of these, by a young lady, was a song and dance, entitled "Looking for a Boy." Her singing was said to be sweet and her dancing, in the glare of the spotlight, was also delightful. Everything else was of similar character, and kept the audience in rollicking laughter to the last item, which was a play in which one of the leading performers was the minister's wife, while the minister at the close thanked the audience for the support given. All of this took place in connection with and for the work of one of the outstanding Churches of the Reformation.

When in Melbourne last I was told of a local Baptist Church where the worshipping auditorium had been reduced in size to enable the schoolroom to be enlarged, and a dancing floor put in, so that every Saturday evening the young people can dance together until midnight.

These things are only mentioned here to show the desperate condition to which the leaders of the Protestant Churches are bringing the people, while the Roman Catholic Church is surely pressing steadily forward to the achievement of its ultimate purpose, as that purpose is revealed through the Prophetic Scriptures, which is temporal sovereignty over the nations.

Again to be Dominant.

It is that the Scriptures clearly show the Roman Catholic Church is going to be. How it finally is to come about is explained in Revelation 17. John said: "I saw a woman **sitting** upon a scarlet colored beast." That is, it will be through the secular power, in its last expression, the Harlot is to come into its long-desired achievement. Said Thomas Aquinas: "The Church of Rome is one monarchy over all the kingdoms of the earth, and is among temporal kingdoms, as the mind or soul of the body of a man, or as God in the

world. . . . Therefore, the Church of Rome must not only have all spiritual power, but also the supreme temporal power."

Roman Catholicism has never receded from that position. Cardinal Gasparri, the Papal Secretary of State, said in 1924: "There are three hundred million Roman Catholics in the world. The Great War obliterated, without the lifting of a finger by the Pope, the three principal enemies of the Roman faith—the Kaiser, the Czar, and the Sultan. To-day, ten years after the commencement of the war, there are more than twice as many foreign States which maintain formal diplomatic relations with the Holy See as there was before the war. In 1924, only eleven States had envoys at the Vatican. To-day twenty-four are thus represented. There will shortly be three more."

Again Temporal Sovereignty.

A startling thing has recently happened. The temporal sovereignty of the Papacy over a distinct and specified area is once again recognised. A new Pontifical State has been set up. Its area is not large, but Italy is again to recognise papal sovereignty, and hands over to the Vatican eleven million pounds for the extinction of Vatican claims. Mussolini kissed Cardinal Gasparri's episcopal ring, and received the papal benediction and pledged the power of the Italian State to enforce the papal will in certain directions. It is wonderful how in all this can be seen the beginnings of what is going to be in its terrible fulness after the true Church has gone from the earth. Not so long ago, it was openly said that the Vatican secretly dreaded the Fascisti; and that it was the Society of Jesus that supported Mussolini. Then it came to be known how Mussolini was negotiating with the Pope, though as was said by the newspaper reporter at Rome: "The whole thing is a political bargain and barter. As far as the motives and statesmanship in the deal are concerned, we may regard a horse trade as a lofty transaction in comparison. Mussolini wants to perpetuate his power; the Vatican wants to profit by this ambition. The Dictator feels that with the 'black shirt' militia and the support of the Pope he can crush any opposition that might threaten him hereafter. . . . The stage seems set for

great events here, and the first gun may be sounded at any time."

So wrote the reporter, and the world may well wonder what is going to be in this connection next. If it wants to know, then let the book of Divine Revelation be consulted. The Harlot is coming into power on the shoulders of the nations. For a time temporal sovereignty will surely be in the power of this Church.

To Persecute Again.

It is that John was given to say about the Great Harlot: "And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus." That is to be in the Great Tribulation, which cannot commence till every true believer is raptured from the earth. It was also in regard to the awful time, that yet has to be, the Lord said: "Watch ye, therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man." While from Heaven, the same Lord said to His faithful people: "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." (Rev. 3: 10.)

"Semper Idem" is the Romish motto. Granted the power and persecution must again arise. In the brief of Pope Leo XIII., there was offered "Plenary indulgence and remission of sins to all who offer pious prayers to God for the extirpation of heresies." And the teaching of the Jesuits is also affirmed to be that "The Catholic Church has indisputable right to kill heretics, and every civil government must kill heretics when ordered by the Catholic Church."

It will only be for a brief time the Great Harlot will again be allowed to make herself drunken with the blood of the martyrs. That is plainly intimated. The very power that again makes such awful tragedy possible is actually going to turn and rend the Great Harlot. "And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the Beast, these shall hate the Harlot, and shall make her naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire." (Rev. 17: 16.)

This is the same as was done recently to the Greek Catholic Church by Bolshevism in Russia. It is what God's

Word plainly tells us is to be done to the Harlot Church, just before the revelation of the Son of God from Heaven.

And thus the Bible shows that all false religion is to gather together again under one head, which will ultimately culminate, when the true Church is gone up into Heaven, in the great apostasy that is to be headed by the real Antichrist.

It was from ancient Babylon all false religion came. In the last book of the Bible we see Babylon restored and become the hold of demons and every foul spirit. Do you not see how all things are heading now in that direction?

The Scriptures are being fulfilled to the very letter. All that is happening shows convincingly that the coming of the Lord is near at hand. For again we must see that this is included in what the Lord said: "When ye see all these things, know ye that He is nigh, even at the door." "Oh, ye faithful of the Lord, lift up your heads, rejoice, for the day of your redemption draweth nigh. But see to it that you keep your vision of the Lord clear." "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour, whom resist, steadfast in the faith. Remember, the God of all grace has called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus."

And for you, my dear unconverted hearer, I have one last question. You see that judgment is beginning first at the house of God, and if it begin first at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and sinner appear? Oh, come to Jesus now! There is not a moment to spare. How awful for you, if before you know where you are, as it were, you discover that the Heavenly Bridegroom has called away His Bride! You may seek then to enter, only to find the door shut. What more can I say?

"Louder and sweeter sounds the loving call:
Come, lingerer, come! enter the festal hall;
Room, room, still room; enter, enter now,
Ere night that gate may close; and seal thy doom;
Then the last, low, long cry, 'No room, no room!'
'No room, no room!' oh, woeful cry, 'No room.'"

CHAPTER XIII.

The Sign of Turkey.

"In that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: All that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces." (Zech. 12: 3.)

Heaven's Timepiece.

The words of Divine prophecy and the Signs of the Times are surely the two hands of Heaven's great timepiece. If we will prayerfully study the former, and thoughtfully observe the latter, we must recognise that all the prophetic words concerning the last days are rapidly being transmuted into historic facts. As someone suggested, the two hands of the great dial have well-nigh met, and the clock seems about to strike the hour when the Father is to bid His Son step into the regions of the air to call up His redeemed people unto Himself.

The happenings of these times are really of a thrilling and absorbing interest to the prayerful, intelligent Bible student. In this way only, can we seem to reconcile the fact of a Loving God in the universe of being, with all the agony of life. As was said: "To read history without seeking its interpretation in Scripture is like looking at a piece of embroidery on the wrong side; you see a confused contexture of colored threads, but you look in vain for any settled design of pattern. But the right study of history reconciles all, and links sacred and secular history together." Failure to do this makes it hard to see Divine purpose in anything. Perhaps this explains why so many people to-day seem to be giving up all religion.

The Turk and the Jew.

We shall see how all this works out in connection with the decay and final overthrow of the Turkish Empire. For

even a brief examination of such a subject shows that the study of these things is more thrilling in interest than absorbing romance. The question may here be asked, Why has the above text been chosen? Because of the reason already given, in our study in regard to Russia, the mighty kingdom of the north, and also because all the nations of the latter days are seen only in their relation to Jerusalem, and to the land which God gave to Israel and to his seed for ever. No matter how mighty and great the kingdom or empire is, it is only seen in the Bible in its connection with Israel and Jerusalem. It is well for us to know this thing, for it is the key to the study of all Divine prophecy, and also explains much in human history which otherwise is very difficult to understand.

The text here chosen makes distinct and definite statement. It is, that all who burden themselves with Jerusalem shall find it a burdensome stone and shall be cut to pieces. What thus is said, really refers to the whole period called the Times of the Gentiles, during which the Jewish people, to whom the Holy Land rightfully belongs, were to be away in far-flung exile. As was said by our Lord: "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the Times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." During the whole of that long period, and down to its close, those nations that come to tread down Jerusalem, and go on to burden themselves with the Holy City, are going to find it a burdensome stone, and will also themselves be cut to pieces. It is just that, happened to the four great empires of the Gentile times, from Babylon down. Mighty imperial Rome was cut to pieces just like all the others. And the nation that afterwards had burdened itself, until very recently, with Jerusalem was Turkey. And seeing that Turkey held Jerusalem longer than any other nation, it would be a wonder did God never make known what was to happen. It was in A.D. 636 that Jerusalem was taken first by the Saracen hordes. Soon after the Caliph Omar decided that a Mahommedan Mosque should be built on the site where once stood the Temple of God. For long centuries afterwards these aliens would never permit a Jew to own one inch of ground anywhere in the land. The Jewish people indeed were the very last to receive the least consideration in regard to the privileges and rights appertaining to the Sacred city. Even after-

wards, when permission was granted for some of them to return there, they were always made to feel themselves to be residing in their own holy city on sufferance only.

A Strange History.

There is one expression found in the book of Revelation that seems to have very distinct symbolic implication in regard to the Turkish nation. It is found in Rev. 16: 12. There, it says: "The sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings might be prepared."

In my "Studies in the Book of Revelation" I have endeavored to show that the ultimate consummation of this Scripture has reference to terrific movements that are to happen in regard to mighty armies of soldiers from the far east in the time of the end, just at the time preceding the Battle of Armageddon. Yet, does it seem to me that many of the mighty events of the end time have often a distinct historic foreshadowing contained in them, as well. As was said, by Sir Robert Anderson: "The typology of the Old Testament is the very alphabet of the language in which the doctrine of the New Testament is written." And in regard to the strange appearance of Turkey on the world's historic stage, and the astonishing manner in which this people were used in regard to the unfolding purposes of the great God, there would seem to be a very deep significance in relation to the symbolic drying up at anyrate of the Euphrates river. This may be seen primarily in regard to mighty Babylon, the first of the great empires to burden itself with Jerusalem. When the time had come for Babylon to go, and the Persians were gathered all around the city, it seemed impossible that such a mightily fortified place should ever fall. In regard to it, the historian tells how that the Persians seemed to have quite an impossible task. He said: "Those within the walls simply laughed at the siege, as they had provisions inside for twenty years." There was only one way by which the city could ever be taken. That was through the drying up of the Euphrates. How could this be brought about? It would be a terrific undertaking. The Scriptures tell us, what also is confirmed by Herodotus, that Cyrus conceived the idea of diverting the course of the river. "And when this was done, the Persians who had been assigned

for that post entered by the bed of the river Euphrates." And Xenophon also tells how that "Cyrus, when he heard that there was a feast in Babylon, in which all the Babylonians drink and revel all the night; as soon as it grew dark, taking many men, opened the trenches to the river. Thus the water by night turned along the trenches, and the bed of the river through the city became passable for men." Turning again to Herodotus we read: "If now the Babylonians had perceived beforehand, or known what was done by Cyrus, they would not have overlooked the Persians entering the city, but would have destroyed them wretchedly. For shutting all the gates which led to the river, and themselves mounting on the walls by the brink, they would have taken them as in a net. But now the Persians came upon them unexpectedly. And from the size of the city, as those report who dwell there, when those at the confines were taken, those Babylonians who dwell in the middle did not learn of the capture, but (for it happened to be a feast of theirs) they were dancing at the time, and in high revelry, until indeed they knew it only too well; and thus for the first time Babylon was taken."

How wonderfully exact all Prophetic Scripture is seen to be! It had been written beforehand, of this Babylon: "One post shall run to meet another, and one messenger to meet another, to shew the king of Babylon that his city is taken at one end." (Jer. 51: 31.)

Also in speaking of the prophecies connected with this same event, Dr. Smith, in his "Dictionary of the Bible," points out "that a clear prophecy may have been purposely withheld, in order that the Babylonians might not be put upon their guard." And everything goes clearly to show that thus it had to be for Babylon's day was now come.

In Isaiah (chapter 44: 27) we have the expression: "That saith to the deep, Be dry, and I will dry up thy river." Ellicott, in his commentary on the Bible, states that "the deep" here refers to the Euphrates.

The prophet Jeremiah, foretelling the fall of Babylon, declares: "A drought is upon her waters, and they shall be dried up: for it is the land of graven images, and they are mad upon their idols." (Jer. 50: 38.) And again: "Therefore thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will plead thy

cause, and take vengeance for thee; and I will dry up her sea, and make her spring dry." (Jer. 51: 36.)

Again in Dr. Smith's "Dictionary of the Bible" we find, also under the heading of "Euphrates," the following: "In immediate conjunction with the passage which most clearly declares the taking of the city by a surprise is found an expression which reads very obscurely in our version—'the passages are stopped.' (Jer. 51: 32.) Here the Hebrew term used applies most properly to fords and ferries over rivers; and the whole passage may best be translated, 'the ferries are seized' or 'occupied'; which agrees very well with the entrance of the Persians by the river, and with the ordinary mode of transit in the place, where there was but one bridge."

So was it that the "drying up" of the literal Euphrates led to the capture of mighty Babylon in the olden days, and it was the fall of the literal Babylon that then also led to the restoration of the Jews, after the seventy years of their captivity. Cyrus, the Persian ruler, was used of God in making the restoration of Israel possible, as he was Divinely foretold to do according to Divine purpose. And a study of the whole circumstance would surely suggest distinct relationship, in some symbolic way, to this later drying up of the great river, the Euphrates, mentioned as yet to be, in Revelation sixteen. At the least is seen remarkable similarity of detail.

There are also other important features, in regard to the Euphrates, that are not without a measure of significance now for the student of prophecy, specially as they can be seen to apply to the strange history of Turkey's uprising and recent decline. The river rises among the Armenian mountains, and it is reckoned to be about 1780 miles long. It is the longest and most important river in Western Asia, and is liable to tremendous inundations, during which it overflows its banks, though it has no tributaries whatever. This is not surely laying one's self open to any charge of fanciful misinterpretation of what is written, to now suggest that the whole history of Turkey, from its beginning, and according to Prophetic Scripture, yet as it seems likely to be, has seemed to have in it some distinct reflection of the great river with which their early history is associated.

Turkey's Strange Uprising.

There is certainly something decidedly remarkable about the rise of Turkey. A map of the world before our eyes might greatly help us to appreciate the wonder. You remember where this people originated—away on the eastern side of the great Euphrates. Now, just imagine a river in flood. It rises until it overflows its banks. The waters spread far and wide on both sides, until the whole country is inundated. Even so, was it with the uprising of the early Saracen hosts. On the east, they stretched out to the borders of China; on the west, they soon reached Palestine, and all the efforts of the Crusaders could not check them; on the south, they crosssed into Africa, and spread over the greater part of the northern portion of that vast continent; in the north, they overflowed rapidly into Asia Minor, crossed the Bosphorus, conquered Greece, and spread over Europe till they reached the shores of the Adriatic, and on to Venice, until they actually reached the walls of Vienna. Thus, when the Saracens reached the height of their power the whole of the south-east of Europe, the greater part of North Africa, and the whole of West Asia were under their rule. Their domination extended from the shores of the Adriatic on the west to the borders of China on the east, while in Africa it reached nearly from the Atlantic to Suez. Accordingly, the world used to speak of Turkey in Europe, Turkey in Asia, and Turkey in Africa.

Why This Awful Inundation?

This is the question that may now arise: Why was it God permitted this dreadful Mahomedan power to spread over these various lands, and in this way thus inflicting great suffering upon people who were at least nominally Christian? It is not for me to explain the inscrutable operations of all Divine purpose. God moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform. But may I be permitted to present another question not so difficult? Why did God permit the marauding armies of Assyria to swoop down upon the people of Israel, who were actually as dear to Him as is the apple of His eye? Well do we know that it was because of their sin. They had gone into idolatry. They had departed from the accomplishment of the Divine purpose, for which they had been originally

separated from all other nations; and we, also, know that later when the fierce Saracen hordes spread themselves over these nominally Christian lands, Christianity in the world was then rapidly being corrupted out of all recognition. Who knows but that behind this awful inrush of the Asiatic hordes it was the Divine purpose to purge out the deadly corruption that was then so quickly leavening through the pure meal of the Gospel?

We have only to be permitted the privilege of visiting lands of ancient historic interest, in order to have some deeper realisation and understanding in regard to Divine purpose in thus permitting the breaking up of the privileged nations of earlier times. Many of them had the Gospel of Christ ministered to them by the holy apostles, yet did these nations only corrupt the Divine Gospel, and make entirely inoperative for millions of people its eternal blessedness. Such an impression really came upon me, specially, while standing amidst the ruins of a mighty temple at Luxor in Egypt. Here were to be seen, at the same place, the impressive relics of three distinct religions. There were first the majectic columns and immense blocks of stone that belonged to the original pagan worship for which the temple was first set up. On the ruins had come to be erected the altar and interior of a Christian Church, for in the Gospel's earliest days Egypt had been greatly favored by having the Apostolic Gospel. But, even then, the Mystery of Iniquity was already at work, and the whole thing became completely demoralised, until every vital feature of the Divine message came to be almost completely obliterated. Then was permitted to arise the Mahomedan scourge, so that, for many centuries, there has stood, just there, an Islamic Mosque, and the religion it represents dominates everything in Egypt.

It was for Israel's persistent sin, though its people were truly dear to the Divine heart, that God caused it to be written: "The Lord bringeth upon them the many waters of the river, strong and many, even the king of Assyria, and all his glory: and he shall come up over all his channels, and go over all his banks." The same thing also it was, that was Divinely permitted against a Christianity that had by then become so terribly debased.

The Flood.

The Turks originally were from Chorassan—the ancient Parthia—a country south of the river Oxus, and lying between the Hymalia and the Caspian Sea. It was soon after they had come to accept the Mahomedan religion that this people flooded and overflowed into Europe. They went all over Greece, including Cyprus and Crete, and were not halted until they had even passed the very banks of the Danube. It was A.D. 1453 when they first captured Constantinople, and it was for 200 years from that date they held dominance over eastern Europe. It was not until the year 1699 that Turkey ceased to menace the peace of Europe. Though an abatement of the muddy flood waters had actually begun even before this time.

The Turk Had To Go.

Now, here is something that should never be forgotten. In connection with the unfolding of His Divine purpose, the Deity, as already suggested, may use some nation to cause distress, even unto a people that may be very dear unto Himself. The afflicting nation may not itself be acceptable to the holiness of God; the very wickedness of its condition may be what it is, that, for the time being, enables it to be used for the correcting of those that then need correcting. We here remember that even Satan has some place now in regard to the ultimate development of all Divine purpose. Pagan nations were what usually God used for the punishing and for the correcting of His people Israel, specially in regard to the seventy years of their first captivity. And for that whole period, world power was actually given over into the hand of the Babylonian king. This was in order that His own elect people should suffer, so that through their hard trials they might be brought back again into Divine purpose and blessing. But, here was the solemn declaration of the Almighty intention: "And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the Lord, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolation. And I will bring upon that land all my words which I have pronounced against it, even all that is written in this book, which Jeremiah hath prophesied against all nations. For many nations and great shall serve

themselves of them also: and I will recompense them ACCORDING TO THEIR DEEDS, AND ACCORDING TO THE WORKS OF THEIR OWN HANDS." (Jer. 25: 12.)

This recompense had to come to them because of their cruelty in regard to carrying through the Divine design, and for their brutal treatment of God's people, temporarily handed over to them. In making those suffer, on whom the love of God is set, was all in the Divine plan for Israel, but that it was so did not justify the cruelty of those who did it. That is why the Divine judgment, beforehand, was written: "Israel is a scattered sheep; the lions have driven him away: first the king of Assyria hath devoured him; and last this Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon hath broken his bones. Therefore, thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Behold, I will punish the king of Babylon and his land, as I have punished the king of Assyria." (Jer. 50: 17.)

There are thus two ways by which a person may be in Divine purpose. The one is by living the life according to the revealed will of God. The other may be by causing much sorrow to those upon whom the eternal love is set, but who, because of their shortcoming, need the chastening thus being given them. But God nowise will justify the wickedness of those who distress His elect people, though even it was in the Divine purpose that such distress for them should come.

So that is why the Turk had to go, and it is that explains fully the phenomenal decline and collapse of the Turkish Empire as it now can be seen, in the pages of all human history. Fearful crime has stained red the whole experience of the Turk in all the day of his power. Helpless people, like the Armenian Christians, have been rounded up like sheep, and men, women and children shot down in cold blood, while the young girls were carried away for something worse. Such shocking outrage continued through, until now the Armenian nation no longer exists. The cruelty of the Turk in history has really been a feature of his religion. To him every Christian is as an infidel, and a danger as real as is that of a pestilence. It has thus been in the name of Allah the Turk has fought his battles. In the same name he has been guilty of shocking atrocities that have filled all others with feelings of horror. The wrong conception of Deity, given them by Mohammed, and continu-

ally fostered in them by the powers of darkness, has made the Turk's history what surely it has been—unfeelingly cruel.

This also has been the case as well in regard to other peoples. The history of every nation has always been right in harmony with its understanding in regard to God.

In this also is found explanation of the cruel persecutions by the Roman Catholic Church in pre-Reformation days. It also explains the persecutions that relate to any people. This also accounts for Russia's continued persecution of the Jews, and of even their own people, who have happened to receive that measure of light and liberty in the Gospel of Christ which their State Church formerly never could give them. The purer the vision of God the nearer have any people ever, in their manner of life, approximated to national righteousness. It is, I hope, with entirely unprejudiced judgment I say this about our own nation. If in its development, the British people has shown some finer qualities than have been generally seen in some other nations. such have only been the effects of the gracious influence of that purer conception of God and His Gospel that came to Britain, through the Reformation and its consequent heritage of an open Bible. But Turkey never has known the blessing of the Gospel, hence its terrible history. Therefore, the nation has to come to a full end, as the inspired Word of God declares.

The Ebb.

It was in A.D. 1571, the Turks received their first real check. They were then defeated in the naval battle of Lepanto. Their treaty had then begun. They waged war with Germany, and with Russia, and with Austria, only to be defeated in each instance. So they continued to be driven right back out of Europe, until the year 1820, which, in regard to Turkey, came to be a year of peculiar significance for students of Divine prophecy.

That very year the Greek insurrection broke out, and by 1827 Greece was altogether free from the power of the Turk, and the present kingdom was established. That same year also Servia shook herself free, and became a nation once again. It was also that year Roumania and all the territory north of the Danube became free of the Ottoman yoke. Bul-

garia, Bosnia, Herzegovina, the Crimea, with a portion of Southern Russia, Asia Minor to the borders of Persia, Egypt, Syria, Tripoli, Tunis, Algiers, and numerous islands in the Mediterranean had all passed from the rule of Turkey in the years immediately preceding the Great War. Just think of it! In 1821, in Northern Africa, the Turk ruled from Egypt to the Atlantic, but quickly, within just a few years, the final shred of Turkish rule over all of these countries was gone, and finally Egypt was also torn out of the Turk's enfeebled grasp.

Thus from 1820, the exhaustion of the Turkish Power and the drying up of the flood with which for nearly 400 years it had inundated half Christendom have been going on with a rapidity beyond what any sober mind could have anticipated. From 1820 to 1897 Turkey has lost Greece, Servia, Moldavia, Wallachia, Morocco, Algeria, Egypt, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Bulgaria and Crete.

So that thus the mighty change had come. The mighty had fallen, and Turkey had come to be spoken of as "The Sick Man of Europe. It was in 1914 Britain assumed the responsibility of Egypt. Italy also quickly entered into possession of Tripoli, which was then Turkey's last fragment remaining of North Africa. The brief, fearful struggle with the Balkan States seemed to have brought Turkey to its last gasp, but not then was the moment of the final collapse. It was the Great War! Until the awful struggle commenced, it was only really Great Britain that seemed, for the sake of what was called the balance of power, to permit of Turkey retaining a place among the nations. It was a very strange condition of things. The war came. Turkey had to fight. On which side was it to be? In many difficulties, Britain had been the recognised friend of the Turk. It was a really strange relationship. But there it was. And the world never anticipated anything else but that the Turk would fight with the Briton in this, the greatest war of all history. By doing it, he would have everything to gain, while on the other side would be nothing to gain and everything to lose. By not standing in with the British, the Turk certainly would of necessity make a strange and difficult position for the British. Many millions of Britain's subjects are Mahomedan, the same as the Turk. The ruler of the throne of Turkey was really the world head of the Mahom-

edan religion. It could never be thought possible that Mahomedan would fight against Mahomedan, in favor of Christian. Never had it been before.

But it had to be. The hour had come. The hands on the Divine dial were about to meet. Jerusalem was in the centre. For twelve hundred years the Turk had been in possession. Long before, God had caused it to be written of the Holy City: "All that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces." The time had come for Turkey to be cut in pieces. How was it known? Only because the Great God had made it known so long before. It had happened to Babylon two thousand five hundred years before. The same thing in due course had happened also to Rome and to all the other great Gentile empires as well. Every nation that had sought to burden itself with Jerusalem had surely gone. And the time for the beginning of the punishing of all the nations that had afflicted Israel was now surely come. Russia, Germany, Poland, Turkey and all the others. I really said all this long before Jerusalem was taken. It was no idle speculating, I then said. It was in the clearly expressed purpose of the God of Heaven, "Though all the people of the earth be gathered against Jerusalem, they will all be cut to pieces."

The End of the Gentile.

What was it was said to the Jews, soon to be scattered, by our Lord nineteen hundred years ago? It was this: "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." That simply meant that Turkey had to lose Jerusalem. The city had to be shaken free of the Turk's desolating rule. It could not have happened had the Turk fought alongside of Britain. You see, the great modern British empire, in the wonderful purpose of God, had in time of stress and strain to make solemn pledge in regard to the still weary-footed Jew, that his own land was now going to be assured to him as once again his for a national home. The end of everything from the beginning is always in the view of the Great God. He had made it all known before what now was going to be. Yes, the hour had struck. The Jew everywhere was waiting for his land. There was a something that seemed to be in the very air. The whole world had come to a condition of eager

expectancy. None could know what was coming but the humble, earnest student of the Divine Words.

So the Turk fulfilled destiny. He lined up with the Germans, and with the others. He dug battle trenches and poured deadly shot and shell into his old friends and allies of the British race. And here was the strange thing. It well-nigh staggered the world. What was it? Mahomedan then fought alongside of Christian against Mahomedan. The Arab also filled out his destiny. Is he not after all first cousin to the Jew? He may have been obliged long ago to receive another religion. He may even jealously keep the Jew out of what are, to both of them, places of sacred interest, but they are of the same original blood, through Abraham. So the Arab could not help himself. The hour had come. The hands on the Divine dial were just pointing that way.

God's great purpose had surely to be accomplished. The whole world was being brought right up against its mightiest climax. No one of mature years then, now living, can ever believe that the world now is quite the same. There is a difference. For most people everything is changed. And no one can ever imagine the world will ever be the same again, any more. How can it be? Are we not now in the fulfilling of the Times of the Gentiles? The Divine purpose must surely go right on to its wonderful consummation. There can be no further pause. It may not now be long when will ring through the heights of Heaven, to be heard by a whole universe of redeemed souls: "Time shall be no more." That is, there can be no longer delay.

The Turk simply entered the nations' melting pot, for him, on the wrong side. What wonderful things then began to happen! He said, We will go through the desert to Egypt, and while Britain's armies are fiercely engaged further over, we will drive our former friends right out from the country of Pharaoh. The canal will be ours, and the victory is sure. It all seemed so easy. But, was it? What did this mean? Although he came right through to the very edge of Egypt, the Turk found himself being driven back, and back he went, right away past Sinai, and on to the very Plains of Sharon, and even then his backward pilgrimage was not stayed, not for one moment. You see the Turk was then on his way right out of the land altogether, the land that had never been his,

though he had been permitted to burden himself with it for so long.

So back he still had to go, until he had surrounded himself with the greatest of guns at Jerusalem. He then bravely announced to the whole world that he was then able to hold Jerusalem for ever. But it could not be done! The hour had struck! So back further still, away up through Samaria and Galilee and beyond, even right out into Syria, and, at last, out of that to his own land, from whence he has never returned. So that, by the time all that had happened, the greatest war of all history was drawing near its terrific close.

Two things had happened. It had now become possible for the Jew to return and begin the rehabilitation of his own land, so as to be ready for the next mighty Divine movement in regard to the restoration of his race to God.

Cut To Pieces.

The other thing that had happened was the fulfilment of the great Divine declaration, in regard to Jerusalem: "All that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces." This it is that has surely happened. The thing has been done. What? Turkey has been cut in pieces. The Turk had to lose his grip on Jerusalem. Then the Holy Land became lost to him, and then Syria, and then all the rest of the entire land that was Divinely covenanted to be in the everlasting possession of God's people of Israel. All the way right through to the very banks of the great river, the Euphrates itself, the Turk had to let go, and it all came under the more kindly oversight of the Tarshish nation, which God, more than two thousand years before, had said would have it, until the completion of all Divine purpose in regard to everything.

The Turk also lost his throne. The Sultan, with his gorgeous palaces and vast harem, no longer exists. The place that knew him, for so long before, does it so no more now. Years ago, Dr. Joseph Parker, in the City Temple, London, one time shocked the world by the expression of a thunderous desire. His soul had been so shocked by reading of the Sultanic atrocities then happening, that he actually cried out in the presence of his great congregation: "God damn the Sultan!" It was surely a fearful thing to be said. Well, the Sultan has gone! No longer has the head of Mahomedanism

anything to do with Turkey. The Caliphate also has gone.

Also was taken from the Turk, by the victorious nations, the very last strip of Europe he then had come to possess. But the nations did not know what to do with Constantinople. Indeed, not one of the nations but wanted to have such a city, so wonderful, and with a position of such terrific geographic and strategic importance. But none could bear that any other should have it. There was only one thing to be done. That was to hand it back to Turkey. But Turkey did not really seem to want it. Why? Because Turkey had, by then, really receded right away back, yes, almost away to the very banks of the Euphrates again. With all its old magnificence gone, and now a Republic, or something, almost like a Soviet, under the leadership of Kemal Pasha, one of the newest of the new Turks, Turkey had, by then, begun the raising of a new capital and seat of Government a very long way from the old. Constantinople had again to be taken over by the Turk. There was nothing else to be done. He could not help doing it, but the Turk takes but little interest in his old city of desire. The reason why may in a moment be suggested.

This is what one able and well-informed writer in a recent number of the "Nineteenth Century and After" Magazine has to say of the city of the Golden Horn: "The day of Constantinople, which for centuries has battened, like a parasite, on the rest of the empire, is over. As for Eastern Thrace (the only part of European Turkey still left), recent history has shown that its tenure is far too precarious to make it worth while wasting much money on its development. So much is this the general feeling that no Turk will buy land or settle in that part of the country, if he can help it. At the last census (1927) the population of Eastern Thrace (exclusive of Constantinople) did not exceed 255,000. At the census taken by the Greek Government in 1920 (when Eastern Thrace was temporarily under Greek occupation) it had a population of 513,000."

An Amazing Thing.

This is in connection with what the Turk since the Great War has done. He has chosen a wretched hamlet that was buried amidst the dreary wastes of the Anatolian plateau, and is now rapidly changing it into the capital of his nation.

This new city, Angora, is to cost the Turk many millions of pounds to make. A proper water supply is costing three million pounds alone. Railroads, roads, and other great works are all being constructed. To enable the thing to go on, the authorities had secured the suspension, for the time being, of the whole of Turkey's former stupendous debts. It is indeed a strange thing that is happening. By the new Turkish policy, the whole country is fast coming to be entirely Turkish. Other peoples, like the Jews, the Greeks and similar races, are not encouraged to stay. Whole populations are coming to be segregated. For example, the Greeks are flowing back out of Turkey into Greece. And the Jews have started wholesale emigration to other countries. The Turks now desire no other people of any other religion, but their own, to be in the land. So the others are feeling obliged to go. The Turks are being left to themselves. There is surely another stage in regard to what yet has to be.

What Next?

It is from God's Word only, what is next to be, in regard to Turkey, can be understood. The prophetic message is not yet complete and finished with the people of this nation. Nor is the Turk quite through yet with Jerusalem. In an earlier chapter we have seen all this. Jerusalem is again to become the centre of mighty conflict. It is to be in the Time of the End. Russia is to head a mighty confederation of armies from the nations. Through the Prophet, God says: "In the latter years thou shalt come into the land that is brought back from the sword, and is gathered out of many people, against the mountains of Israel, which have been always waste: but is brought forth out of the nations, and they shall dwell safely all of them." (Ezek. 38: 8.)

We have seen that one of these nations is called "Togarmah of the north quarters." That is, from the very territory where the Turk is now setting up his brand new capital city, and where he is now making himself afresh. You see, there is no mistake, ever, in regard to the fulfilments of God's prophetic Word. All we now read of, in the new methods of life coming into Turkish experience—the acceptance of the Latin alphabet and all the rest—is but evidence of a manful effort to rehabilitate a nation that has been sorely cut to pieces. All the other nations are doing the same

thing. But, what is it all for? To what is it all heading? In order to be quite friendly, the great United States nation must have a navy at least as large as that of Britain. Millions of money must be handed over to pay for the ships, and the men must be found to man them. And Britain must go on building up-to-date ships. What is it for? France now has a standing army three or four times larger than in 1914. So is it in regard to every other nation. But, what is it all for? My brothers, it is all for the final struggle, as that is depicted in the prophetic Word of the Great God. The mighty grim personality called the Beast is to arise. "And at the Time of the End shall the king of the South push at him: and the king of the North shall come up against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into countries, and shall overflow and pass over. HE SHALL ALSO ENTER INTO THE GLORIOUS LAND."

In regard to all of this, the Turk again, unfortunately for himself, is going to be on the wrong side. "Thou shalt ascend and come like a storm, thou shalt be like a cloud to cover the land, thou, and all thy bands, and many people with thee." The Turk is going to be right there, in the very heart of everything. "To take a spoil, and to take a prey; to turn thine hand upon the desolate places that are now inhabited, and upon the people that are gathered out of the nations." (Ezek. 38: 12.)

Then God is to be really angry. "And it shall come to pass at the same time when Gog shall come up against the Land of Israel, saith the Lord God, that my fury shall come in my face. For in my jealousy and in the fire of my wrath have I spoken. Surely in that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel." For the last time, the declaration regarding Jerusalem is to be fulfilled. "In that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: All that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces."

Something First to Happen.

It is to come before the final climax. The greatest thing this world has ever known! What is it? Just this! The coming of the Blessed Lord Jesus Christ into the air to receive His own unto Himself. Every one of those who have already believed unto the salvation of God is then to

go. There can be no mistake here. "The dead in Christ shall rise first, then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air." All of us! There can be no mistake about this. "We shall not ALL sleep, but we shall ALL be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." (1 Cor. 15: 52.)

"ALL." That means everybody thus included. It means all who have been saved by faith in the Gospel. "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the Gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand by; by which also ye are SAVED." (1 Cor. 15: 1.)

Something Else.

It relates to what the Lord said in regard to such a time as is now here. "When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh."

He did not say, "When ye see these things come to a full end." Nor did He say: "When these things approach their climax." What our Lord said, was: "When these things BEGIN to come to pass. THEN, LOOK UP, AND LIFT UP YOUR HEADS." Why? "FOR YOUR REDEMPTION DRAWETH NIGH."

That is it! When the beginnings of all these things are to be seen we are to know the coming of our Lord is at hand, and we are to look up.

But all these things are now here, at least, in their beginnings. It is this the whole of this book is intended to show. There is no intelligent, believing person, who reads in the Bible what God has foretold is to happen in the Time of the End, but must recognise and frankly admit that it is all happening now.

Then, the Lord must be at hand. When ye see all these things, know ye that He is nigh, even at the doors. This is my message. The hour is soon to strike. The sound of the trump, the voice of the archangel, and the shout of the descending Lord are about to be heard. Surely, the rapid accuracy with which prophetic events are now happening must convince you of that. Then let me ask, and I hope I do it with the right tenderness of inflection in my

voice, are you prepared for the great change? Are you ready to meet God? Now! Have you acknowledged yourself a sinner? Have you accepted God's forgiveness which He offers you in Christ? If not, why not now? "Oh, do not let the word depart, nor close thine eyes against the light. Poor sinner, harden not thy heart. Thou wouldst be saved? **Why not to-night?**" Make the decision this very moment. Even while your eyes are on these words, do yield your heart and your life to your God.

CHAPTER XIV.

"The Silent Witness in Egypt"

"In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the land: whom the Lord of Hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be Egypt, my people." (Isa. 19: 24, 25.)

It is a really extraordinary thing that is here said, and it is God Who says it. "Blessed be Egypt, My people." It is not concerning now that God says the wonderful thing. Neither in all the past has the Deity ever spoken in such a way regarding Egypt. Indeed, there never has been a time, down to this very moment, when not anything but the very opposite of what is here said, could have been spoken of the people of this land. Yet, here it is clear enough. It is of the Egyptians the wonderful thing is written: "Blessed be Egypt, My people." Now, there can be no mistake regarding what is thus affirmed, seeing it is the Holy God Who affirms it. So then, as there never has been a time when such a thing could ever have been between God and the Egyptians, the thing said can only relate to the future. And it is just that which now becomes quite evident as we look more closely at what is here written. It is to be, "In that day." That is a day, as we are going to see, which yet has to be. But, it is a day that seems now close at hand. The reason for saying this, will become quite evident as we go on. The chief thing for us now to know is that what is said in the Scripture before us has never applied to any past condition before God of the Egyptian people. Yet is it quite clear that, during nearly the whole of past time, Egypt has ever had a distinct place in the working out of some of the greatest of the Divine purposes. This land has ever been a definite background, at least, for thrilling development in relation to everything that yet has to be.

When the people of Israel were to be made a nation, the land of Egypt was chosen as their nursery. Moses, the first and greatest of Israel's prophets, was actually rescued from a watery grave, nurtured, trained and fitted for his exalted mission by the daughter of Egypt's mighty ruler. The patriarch Abraham, in his need, was succored for a time in Egypt. Jacob and his house, humanly speaking, would surely have famished but that Egypt supplied them with bread, and welcomed them to the richest of its lands, and even gave to the patriarch a royal burial at his dying. Joseph, God's favorite, is distinctly seen as a wonderful type of Christ, only indeed because of his intimate connection with that same land of Egypt. It was to the Egyptian Pharaoh there was given the wonderful double dream of the kine and the ears of corn, which led on to the exaltation of Joseph and the ultimate salvation of many peoples. And when our blessed Saviour came to be born, it was Egypt that provided Him an asylum from Herod's scheme to destroy the Holy Child. Thus was fulfilled again and more literally than ever before the Divine Word: "Out of Egypt have I called My Son."

Since even then, Egypt has still been an instrument for the furthering of God's gracious purposes. For it was actually from that land came out the first translation of the Divine Scriptures. It was there, also, after Jerusalem had finally fallen, the real stronghold of Christianity was found. And from Egypt also came the noblest and greatest of those who are called the fathers of the Christian Church.

As Walter Scott has written: "Egypt has been a land of wonders in the past; it will be a land of wonders in the future. If in Judah the **heart** of God has been disclosed, in Egypt the arm of Jehovah has been bared." No matter what the present condition of its native population God has still something great to accomplish through means of this country which so much He has used in times past.

Egypt's Former Greatness.

Regarding Egypt, an illuminating thing is said in the fifteenth verse of the twenty-ninth chapter of Ezekiel. "It shall be the basest of the kingdoms; neither shall it exalt itself any more above the nations: for I shall diminish them,

that they shall no more rule over the nations." These words were put into writing, nearly six hundred years before our Lord Jesus Christ came the first time into this world. They plainly indicate that prior to that time, two thousand five hundred years ago, Egypt had been holding high authority over other nations, though never again was it to do that any more. For Egypt actually did exalt itself above and at one time did exercise rule over all the other nations. Egypt is indeed the most venerable nation of all antiquity, and its marvellous civilisation stretches far beyond the earliest dawn of human history.

A Wonderful History.

No other land surpasses in interest that of Egypt, specially for the student of Scripture. It is the most venerable of antiquity, and its marvellous civilisation stretches back beyond the dawn of history. In all probability the mother of Greek literature, and hence of all literature, art, sculpture, music, and architecture of Europe. Egypt, at one time a mighty conquering power, her armies overran Asia to the shores of the Euxine and Caspian Sea. Her fleets swept over the Indian Ocean to the mud-stained shallows of the Indus flood. On the ancient monuments can be read glowing records of those mighty campaigns. What wonderful learning was found in the land! As a gauge of Solomon's wisdom, we are told he was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians.

In that wonderful valley, 600 miles long, rainless, yet watered by the inundation of the Nile, the Egyptian people were supplied with a year's crop for practically a few days of labor, and thus were provided with ample leisure from bodily toil, which enabled them to become great in the arts and in military prowess. Fine cities and towns were everywhere. What mighty monuments they erected, and also temples of yellow and rose-tinted sandstone, with obelisks of green granite and long avenues of sphinxes, to commemorate their victories and immortalise their name! And what wonderful skill they acquired in the preservation of the bodies of their dead! For thousands of years, unto this very day, the mummified bodies of their mighty ones have been kept from corruption, while generation after genera-

tion of all others have crumbled away into dust. A proud and wonderful nation was Egypt in the day of its former glory.

Contrasting its present humiliating condition with its former greatness, Lane writes: "It is melancholy to compare the present state of Egypt with its ancient prosperity, when the variety, elegance and exquisite finish displayed in its manufactures attracted the admiration of surrounding nations, and its inhabitants were in no need of foreign commerce to increase their wealth, or to add to their comforts. Antiquarian researches show us that not only the Pharaohs and the priests and the military chiefs, but also a great proportion of the agriculturists, even in the age of Moses, and at a yet earlier period, passed a life of the most refined luxury, were clad in linen of the most delicate fabric, and reclined on couches and chairs which have served as models for the furniture of our modern saloons."

The Rev. John Urquhart also wrote concerning Egypt: "She had been the mother of science and letters and art. At the fire which had burned upon her hearth the nations had kindled the lamp of knowledge, which has burned on age after age, and which now flames so brightly. Her greatness was unique. It was more true and human than that of any other ancient land, save that of Greece; and she had the unity, and repose, and calm majesty which Greece lacked. She stood alone among the nations, great, wise, self-respecting; around her the choicest treasures of earth; her land filled with imperishable monuments of might and skill and genius; her people in their order and enlightenment and civilisation a marvel to all time."

Wilkinson tells us that "considerable sums were expended in furnishing houses, and in many artificial caprices. Rich jewels and costly works of art were in great request, as well among the inhabitants of the provincial capitals as at Thebes and Memphis. They delighted in splendid equipages, elegant and commodious boats, numerous attendants, horses, dogs and other requisites for the chase; and, besides, their houses, their villas, and their gardens were laid out with no ordinary expense. . . . The rich frequently had ornamental works, statues, and furniture of solid gold."

The skill of the workers was marvellous. We are told that the byssus woven in the looms of those who worked "in combed flax" was actually sold for its weight in gold. One writer says that the quality of one piece of linen found near Memphis was so wonderfully fine that its touch was comparable to silk. "Some idea may be given of its texture from the number of threads in the inch, which is 540 (270 double threads) in the warp, and 110 in the woof. It is covered with small figures and hieroglyphics so finely drawn that here and there the lines are with difficulty followed by the eye. . . . The perfection of its threads is equally surprising; the knots and breaks seen in our best cambric are not found in holding it to the light."

Pliny says that some of the nets "were so delicate that they would pass through a man's ring, and a single person could carry a sufficient number of them to surround a whole wood."

The same wonderful skill is evident in relation to all other form of industry in connection with ancient Egypt. For in the manufacture and working of glass and the various metals, in dentistry and in carpentry, in the embalming of the dead and in all other trades the ancient Egyptians had acquired really a most extraordinary ability. "Many arts and inventions were in common use in Egypt for centuries before they are generally supposed to have been known; and we are now and then as much surprised to find that certain things were old 3000 years ago, as the Egyptians would be if they could hear us talk of them as late discoveries."

And continues Wilkinson: "The moving of immense masses of stone hundreds of miles shows that the Egyptians were well acquainted with mechanical powers, and the mode of applying a locomotive force with the most wonderful success. But their skill was not confined to the mere moving of immense weights; their wonderful knowledge of mechanism is shown in the erection of obelisks, and in the position of large stones, raised to a considerable height and adjusted with the utmost precision; sometimes, too, in situations where the space will not admit the introduction of the inclined plane. No wonder, then, we read how when God wants us to know what wonderful knowledge Moses had acquired He caused it to be written that "Moses was learned in all the wonders of the Egyptians."

Even as late as the seventh century of our own era, Egypt was so powerful that the Mohammedan hosts, which had achieved mighty victories everywhere else, hesitated to attack it. The invaders were met with a most terrific resistance. Babylon of Egypt, on whose ruins the town of Fostat now stands, actually detained them seven months, while it took fourteen months to overcome the capital, Alexandria. Only then did Alexandria fall through internal treachery, after twenty-three thousand Arabs had fallen before its walls. The sight of the city's magnificence and enormous wealth then filled the children of the East with a mighty amazement. Gibbon quotes from the report of Amrou to the Caliph, which was as follows: "I have taken the great city of the West. It is impossible for me to enumerate the variety of its riches and beauty, and I content myself with observing that it contains 4000 palaces, 400 theatres or places of amusement, 12,000 shops for the sale of vegetable food, and 40,000 tributary Jews."

The Arabian armies destroyed the royal library, which then must have contained knowledge such as, with all our recent progress, the world has not yet regained. Some idea of the quantity of books then destroyed may be realised when it is mentioned that these were distributed among the baths of the city, to be used as fuel, and which were six months in using them up. This event has since been recognised as one of the world's greatest calamities. It is very certain now that had this vast wealth of knowledge not then been destroyed, the world should not now, as at present, he having the ridiculous theory of evolution foisted upon it. From those writings, we would surely have learned that the intelligence and intellectual capacity of the men who reared up the mighty pyramids, the inscrutable, mysterious sphinx, and set up everywhere throughout their land colossal statues, obelisks and pillars, and erected those immense temples of majestic architecture, in the earliest days of human history, were, at least, not any less than that of to-day.

The Monuments.

Still have the records of Egypt's marvellous history been most wonderfully preserved to us. Monuments, temples, pillars, public buildings, and even the mummy cases and

clothes in which were embalmed the dead, are covered over with hieroglyphics, figures of animals, exploits of their great men, and the mighty deeds of their kings and gods, and even the most trivial circumstances and incidents of life find most careful representation.

A Mighty City.

There were many Divine judgments expressed in the Old Testament regarding the land of Egypt as a whole, there were also great cities concerning which prophetic doom was plainly foretold. One of these was Thebes, the ancient capital of Egypt, which was called by the Greeks, Diospolis (the city of Jupiter), though in the Divine Scriptures it is spoken of by its ancient Egyptian name of No Ammon. The stupendous ruins of Luxor and Carnac, which now occupy part of the site of ancient No, move the visitor to an intense wonder, admiration and real amazement. Wilkinson says that the great temple of Carnac is the largest and most splendid ruin of which, perhaps, ancient or modern times can boast. Another gifted writer says regarding it: "All here is sublime, all majestic. With pain one tears oneself from Thebes. Her monuments fix the traveller's eyes, and fill his mind with vast ideas. Beholding colossal figures and stately obelisks, which seem to surpass human powers, he says, 'Man has done this,' and feels himself and his species ennobled."

Another writer, Miss Edwards, speaking of the Great Hall, says: "To describe it, in the sense of building up a recognisable image by means of words, is impossible. The scale is too vast; the effect too tremendous; the sense of one's own dumbness, and littleness, and incapacity, too complete and crushing. It is a place that strikes you into silence; that empties you, as it were, not only of words, but of ideas. . . . I could only look and be silent. I stand once more among those mighty columns, which radiate into avenues from whatever point one takes them. I see them swathed in coiled shadows and broad bands of light. I see them sculptured and painted with shapes of Gods and Kings, with blazonings of royal names, with sacrificial altars, and forms of sacred beasts and emblems of wisdom and truth. The shafts of these columns are enormous. I stand at the foot of one—or of what seems to be the foot; for the original

pavement seems to be buried seven feet below. Six men standing with outstretched arms, finger tip to finger tip, could barely span it round. It casts a shadow twelve feet in breadth—such a shadow as might be cast by a tower."

Another quotation is given by Mr. Urquhart in his book, "What Are We to Believe," from Belzoni, part of which is here given: "It is absolutely impossible to imagine the scene displayed without seeing it. The most sublime ideas that can be formed from the most magnificent specimens of our present architecture would give a very incorrect picture of these ruins; for such is the difference, not only in magnitude, but in form, proportion, and construction, that even the pencil can convey but a faint idea of the whole. It appeared to me like entering a city of giants, who, after a long conflict, were all destroyed, leaving the ruins of their various temples as the only proofs of their former existence."

Thus is pictured for us some measure of the magnificence of Egypt's ancient capital. What does such thrilling description suggest? In it is no support whatever for the evolution theory. Here are cities built up in the earliest dawn of the world's history still presenting, even in their remains, such magnificence in relation to their architecture that men now standing amidst their naked ruins are actually stunned into solemn silence and impressed only with a sense of present littleness before such evidence of ancient majesty and extraordinary grandeur. In the midst of the forest of ruins and temples, columns, obelisks, colossi, sphinxes, portals, halls and chambers, and innumerable palaces, the awed visitor feels only his own utter insignificance. Another extraordinary circumstance that also stirs to their depths the emotions of those who behold such evidence of past greatness, is the fact that all this sublime magnificence was everywhere associated with the idea of worship. These colossal figures, stately obelisks and majestic temples were erected to the honor not of Jehovah, but to that of the Sun God and many other mythical deities, the worship of which could only tend to the ultimate degradation of the people. Ancient Egypt was filled with idols, and the whole people were completely given up to magic, occultism, and the corrupting practices associated always with every expression of apostate religion.

Five Great Prophecies.

It is here we note the sure and certain fulfilment of the things God has caused to be foretold. The easily discerned outstanding features of Egypt's wonderful history should convince everyone of the certainty of Divine judgment. If men and women would only understand! Everything in the world's life now is precisely as was foretold in the Bible, thousands of years before. The sure judgments of God are coming. Worse things are yet to be than the awful carnage of the Great War, the pestilences which followed it, the fearful earthquakes and the other great calamities that have since been.

All the signs that precede the coming day of the Lord's judgment are now in actual operation. In every phase of the world's life things are taking place, exactly as the Lord said they would, to herald the approach of the coming day. When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, for your redemption draweth nigh.

At the very time when Egypt was great, God caused to be made known five great prophecies regarding this people. Four of them already have been fulfilled, the fifth one still awaits its accomplishment. A very brief glance at these will clearly show how exact is the fulfilment of Divine prophecy.

First, "The Egyptians will I give into the hand of a cruel lord, and a fierce king shall rule over them." (Isa. 19: 4.) It was not long after when the prophecy was fulfilled. Babylon, the first of the four great world empires, made war on Egypt, and conquered it. Ever since then it has been in the hands of some foreign ruler.

The second of the great prophecies concerning Egypt's people is in Ezekiel 29: 13: "Yet thus saith the Lord God: At the end of 40 years will I gather the Egyptians from the nations whither they were scattered. And I will bring again the captivity of Egypt, and will cause them to return into the land of Pathros, into the land of their habitation, and they shall be there a base kingdom. It shall be the basest of kingdoms; neither shall it exalt itself any more above the nations." These words were spoken 600 years before Christ. They explicitly declare that Egypt, once so great and eminently chief among the civilised powers of the earth, would never again be a dominating nation. And ever since

then this people have been literally base, the basest among the kingdoms. We can scarcely understand the former glory of Egypt from her position during the last 2500 years. In his "Ruins of Empire," Volney describes the desolation of desert solitudes where once peopled cities resounded with the busy hum of industrial life. He tells how, beside the eternal Nile, where once the propylaca of vast temples extended, with forests of colossal columns, now the desert sands have almost buried the scanty remnants of past greatness.

The next great prophecy relating to Egypt has to do with the river upon which the people depended for their sustenance. "And the water shall fail from the sea, and the river shall be wasted and dried up. And they shall turn the rivers far away, and the brooks of defence shall be emptied and dried up. The reeds and flags shall wither." (Isa. 19: 5.) The vast river Nile was the pride and strength of ancient Egypt. From the lakes of Central Africa, fed by an incessant rainfall, which takes place during ten months of the year, there issues an overflowing torrent, which, driven by that ocean of falling water hurries northward through a terrible and torrid descent in its course to the sea. From the Abyssinian highlands, with their peaks towering to the clouds of heaven, when the rain season has set in, there issues two great rivers, thundering down the dried-up beds, and rushing into the Nile—the cause of the inundation, which in all ages has made the Nile Valley the granary of the world.

There used to be in Egypt several rivers, but these are not now. The Nile also formerly emptied itself by about seven channels into the Mediterranean. All but two of these have dried up. The sea also has retreated, leaving vast tracts of marshy country. From Alexandria to El Arish used to be the richest spot on earth. Now it is barren and stagnant. The Word of God has been fulfilled.

The fourth prophecy declares that "there shall no more be a prince in Egypt" (Ez. 13: 13), and since that time Egypt has never had a prince of its own. For twenty-four centuries this people have been a prey successively to the Persians, Macedonians, Romans, Greeks, Arabs, Georgios, and the Turks. Take the long line of the Mamelukes! These were nothing else than Circassian slaves, employed to uphold

the Turkish power. Their rule was the rule of slaves, carrying out the declared word that Egypt should be a base kingdom. When their power was broken in 1811, who was then installed in the vacant rule? It was not an Egyptian, but an Albanian—Mahomet Ali—and so it has continued to be.

Exact Fulfilment.

How exact the whole of prophetic fulfilment is, can surely be seen by what God caused the prophet Ezekiel to write: "Thus saith the Lord God: I will also destroy the idols, and I will cause their images to cease out of Noph; and there shall be no more a prince of the land of Egypt; and I will put a fear in the land of Egypt. And I will make Pathros desolate, and will set fire in Zoan, and will execute judgment in No. . . . And I will cut off the multitude of No. . . . And No shall be rent asunder" (or broken up). (Ezek. 30: 13.)

"No" was the Hebrew name for Thebes, and "Noph" stood for what is now known as Memphis. From what God caused to be written concerning the judgments that were to come upon these two cities, we can now learn how exact is the certain fulfilment of everything the Bible foretells. God said He would execute judgments upon No, and would cast off its multitudes so that it would be broken up. Now, there is to be noted a remarkable circumstance in this connection. Regarding this city, Pococke wrote: "Such vast and surprising remains are still to be seen, of such magnificence and solidity as may convince anyone who beholds them that without some extraordinary accident they must have lasted for ever; which seems to have been the intention of the founders of them."

My own great pleasure it has been to stand in the midst of the solemn magnificence of No's mighty ruins. The feelings that arise in such a place were truly deeper than words ever can express.

The builders of Thebes did intend that the magnificence of their city should certainly endure for ever. But an extraordinary accident did actually happen, and that very thing was predicted long before through Ezekiel, the prophet of God. The prophecy was written in the time of Nebuchadnezzar, and it happened that thirteen years after world power had passed into the hands of the Persians, Cambyses

invaded Egypt, captured Thebes, and poured out on this city a most extraordinary ferocity. The whole power of his victorious army was concentrated upon the destruction of No. Its magnificent temples were destroyed by fire, and its colossal statues broken down into ruin. The Divine judgment had then fallen upon the city that was built to endure forever. So that afterwards, in warning Nineveh regarding similar impending judgment, God says: "Art thou better than populous No, that was situate among the rivers, that had the waters round about it, whose rampart was the sea, and her wall was the sea? Ethiopa and Egypt were her strength, and it was infinite." (Nahum, 3, 8.) The Word of God thus explains clearly why great Thebes stands in melancholy ruin to-day. It was by no mere accident, though, its desolation came. It was by a stroke of Divine Judgment, whatever the means of it that were then used.

Noph.

This was the Egyptian name for Memphis. It was the great temple city of all Egypt, and the actual nerve centre for a mighty apostate system of false religion. The Divine prophecy regarding this city is therefore peculiarly fitting. "Thus saith the Lord God: I will also destroy the idols, and I will cause the images to cease from Noph." (Ezek. 30, 13.) Most remarkable is the thorough manner in which this special feature of the Divine judgment found its ultimate accomplishment. It was many centuries after the prediction was given before the thing actually happened. It may often have seemed to early readers of the Old Testament prophecies, because of the long delay, that some mistake had been made here. Strabo, who wrote about the time our Lord was on the earth, speaks of the city as being "then large and populous, next to Alexandria in size." He also makes special mention of its gods, temples and images. Later on, in the beginning of the seventh century of this Christian era, it was then the residence of the Governor of Egypt. Its decay afterwards was gradual. The city of Cairo having been founded in the neighborhood, the population drifted from the old city, and its materials came to be used to extend the new. Yet the vast mass of Memphis remained. A visitor in the thirteenth century wrote: "Its ruins still offer to the eyes of the spectator a collection of wonderful works

which confound the intellect, and to describe which the most eloquent man would labor in vain. The longer we look upon the scene, the higher rises the admiration it inspires; and every new glance that we cast upon the ruins reveals a new charm. Scarcely have they awakened a distinct idea in the soul of the spectator than a still more admirable idea suggests itself; and just as you believe you have gained complete knowledge of them, at that very moment the conviction forces itself on the mind that what you think you know is still very far from the truth."

So, then, the idols and at least the remains of the temples were still there, eighteen hundred years, indeed, after the prophecy had been spoken. Yet through the Prophet, the Great God had declared it: "I will also destroy the idols, and I will cause their images to cease out of Noph." So long as the ruins remained, it would not seem that the Divine prediction had been properly fulfilled. But the thing actually happened as was Divinely foretold. So completely has its doom since been accomplished that even a century ago the very site of Memphis, ancient Noph, was a matter of dispute. Since then, later research has completely settled that question, and also has verified perfectly the complete fulfilment of the Divine prophecy. For all that remains now of the ancient city of idols and temples is one huge broken statue, which is said to be the property of the British nation, and another small figure of red granite, both of remarkable beauty, but broken and laid on the ground. Therefore is it true in regard to this, as it will certainly yet be with reference to all other unfulfilled Divine prophecy. God had said: "I will also destroy the idols, and I will cause their images to cease." And that has been the distinguishing feature in regard to the destruction of Noph.

Krugsch Bey says: "All that remains of this celebrated city at the present time consists of heaps of fragments of columns and altars and carvings which once belonged to the temples of Memphis—a far-stretching mass of mounds, out of which shine in the clear sunlight the remains of the half-destroyed chambers and halls of ancient houses."

Miss Edwards writes concerning her visit to Memphis, this ancient Noph: "We are all gathered round the muddy pool in the midst of which lies a shapeless block of blackened and corroded limestone. This, it seems, is the famous pros-

trate colossus of Rameses the Great. . . . So here it lies, face downwards, and drowned once a year by the Nile; visible only where the pools left by the inundation have evaporated and all the muddy hollows are dried up.

"Where, however, is the companion colossus? Where is the temple itself? Where are the pylons of the obelisks, of the avenues of sphinxes? Where, in short, is Memphis?

"The dragoman shrugs his shoulders and points to the barren mounds among the palms . . . and is this all? No—not quite all. There are some mud huts yonder among the trees; and in front of one there we find a number of sculptural fragments—battered sphinxes, a torso without legs, sitting figures without heads—in green, black, and red granite." God had broken the idols of Noph. These are the pieces.

Everything the Great God, of the future, has spoken will just as surely come to pass.

Egyptians to be Saved.

That is indeed the most wonderful thing, in regard to Egypt, that was ever written. This people are to be among the saved nations of the earth. That can only be at that wonderful time the Bible speaks about, when the knowledge of the Lord is to cover the earth as the waters cover the sea, and when all flesh shall know our Lord as great Saviour and Redeemer. It is just that is declared specially in regard to Egypt, in this wonderful chapter of the prophet Isaiah: "And the Lord shall be known to Egypt, and the Egyptians shall know the Lord in that day." "The Lord shall smite Egypt: He shall smite and heal it: and they shall return even to the Lord, and He shall be intreated of them, and shall heal them."

So there can be no mistake here. The Egyptian nation is going to be restored to God. A letter written by an aged and highly respected Jewish Christian preacher, on his escape from the Turks, then in possession of Jerusalem, a few months after the commencing of the Great War, was for me of very deep interest. What the old man then said was: "Our Lord, in His great mercy, saved me from the cruel hand of Turkey, took me out of Sodom (German colony), and safely brought me to Alexandria, which is now the 'City of Refuge' for many thousands of distressed men, women and children.

Ah! how wonderful God's ways are! Egypt, where my fathers were slaves in bitter bondage, is now the land of the free! Her gates wide open to those who are fortunate enough to escape the cruel murder of the oppressors—Turkey and Germany. There is a great future for Egypt. It was Egypt which drew out Joseph from the dungeon, and set him next to the throne of the king; it was Egypt which trained up Moses, the great prophet, emancipator, legislator, leader; it was Egypt which rescued our Blessed Redeemer, the Babe of Bethlehem, from the cruel hand of Herod! And now Egypt is about to receive her reward! Again, how wonderful the Lord's ways are! England, God destined to work out His plans; it is England who, wherever she puts her foot, brings liberty, freedom, saving love for soul and body. The Word of God, England first sent all over the world; her missionaries reached the farthest quarters of the earth. England abolished slavery. England was first to befriend the sons of Israel; it is England who is the instrument in God's hand to make Egypt what God promised by His prophet Isaiah (19: 25). Egypt is again a kingdom; let Israel next become a kingdom."

Signs.

Concerning Egypt's restoration, God gives definite sign to show when the wonderful happening may be known as being then at hand. It may be here necessary to mention that the word "day" does not of necessity mean simply twenty-four hours. In prophetic purpose, it usually refers to any period of time that just then is under consideration. It is in that regard we now read the wonderful thing here said: "In that day shall there be a highway out of Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria, and the Egyptians shall serve with the Assyrians. In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the land: whom the Lord of hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance."

What is said is clear. Egypt, Assyria and Israel are all going to be found serving and worshipping God at the same time. They are all going to be then a blessing on the earth. This they never yet have been. It is therefore in the future

the wonderful thing is to be. And as already said, this only can be at the time when, as foretold in second Isaiah, all the nations are to flow unto the House of God at Jerusalem, and the Lord is to judge among the nations, and rebuke many people so that they shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks, so that they will learn war no more.

At that time there is to be a highway connecting Egypt with Assyria. This highway really means a road for rapid communication between the two countries mentioned. It may mean a railway, or any other such modern means for quick intercourse.

Now, before the Great War the German nation had decided on a railway to connect Berlin with Bagdad. The line was carried away beyond Damascus, and long before now might easily have been completed. But the war came. During the mighty upheaval a strange thing happened. The Turks came through to Egypt to drive the British from the Suez Canal. The Allies had to fight them, and ultimately drove the Turks right back over the desert of Sinai, through Palestine and away beyond. As the conquering allied armies advanced, they constructed a railroad across the desert, up through Palestine, until it was connected on with the Kaiser's railway to Bagdad. This simply meant that a very considerable portion of the highway out of Egypt to Assyria was thus completed, so that now the journey from the two countries mentioned, which formerly took many months, at least, to accomplish, now only takes a few days.

The Silent Witness.

Now we come to the consideration of the most wonderful thing, surely, the world knows. The Divine words with which its description is given would certainly indicate its mighty importance: "In that day shall there be an altar to the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar thereof to the Lord. And it shall be for a sign and for a witness unto the Lord of hosts in the land of Egypt: for they shall cry unto the Lord because of the oppressors, and HE SHALL SEND THEM A SAVIOUR AND A GREAT ONE AND HE SHALL DELIVER THEM." (Isa. 19: 19, 20.)

First of all, as to the time of it. "In that day." That is, in the day of Egypt's desolation. That has been a very

long day indeed, seeing it is now more than 2500 years ago since Babylon first conquered Egypt. Some people have said that this altar of witness is not to be set up until after the Lord has come to establish His kingdom in this world. That cannot be. For the word distinctly says that the altar will be a witness that God is going to send this great Saviour to deliver the Egyptians from their oppressors, not as the witness that such a Saviour has come.

Another thing to be now noticed is that the altar is the same as the pillar. Verse twenty shows it, where, after mentioning the altar and pillar, it says: "IT shall be for a sign," not "they shall be for signs."

Something else may be just as easily understood. It is that this word "pillar" does not simply mean an ordinary pillar or column, but a great and pre-eminent monument, or some other large structure. This great pillar is said to be in the land of Egypt for a special purpose. It is to be for a sign and for a witness unto the Lord of hosts in the land of Egypt. What is it the sign of? Simply this: That the Lord will send a Saviour Who shall deliver an oppressed Egyptian people. And it is after this Heaven-sent Saviour has come that the Egyptians will be the true people of God, as will also be the Assyrians and those of Israel too.

Where It Stands.

This witness-bearing altar is said to stand in the midst of the land of Egypt. Now, that perhaps is altogether the strangest feature about the altar. Why is it in the land of Egypt? Had it said that this altar was to stand in the midst of the land of Israel, the thing would not have suggested to us the least difficulty. For that is the very land where we expect altars to be as witness unto the Lord's faithfulness. But this altar is set up as a sign and witness unto the Lord of hosts, right in the very midst of heathen Egypt. And it is evidently there a very long while before the actual coming again of our Lord, for its purpose is that it should stand as a sign and witness concerning the certainty of that impending wonderful event.

What then does the special fact signify? Just this, that this strange altar in the midst of the land of Egypt was never put there by Egyptian people, for in all its known history the people of this land have ever been only idolators.

How then can we imagine them at any time wanting to erect an altar in their land unto the Lord as a sign and witness that He would send them a Saviour? We shall later notice that the mighty monument now standing in the very location indicated, and which very many earnest students of Divine Truth have come to believe indeed is the witness-bearing altar here mentioned, was actually built by a race of strangers, the native Egyptians, through some strange circumstance being employed in its erection. By many earnest men of God, it is believed that Job had to do with the setting up of the Great Pyramid, as many sayings in Job's book seem to definitely refer to it.

The exact location of the altar is interesting. "In the midst of the land of Egypt, a pillar at the border thereof." How can that be? That is, how can anything be right in the middle and yet on the border at the same time? The mighty monument here to be mentioned, is just on the spot, seeing it is right on the centre line of Egypt, and also at the precise border line, between upper and lower Egypt.

What is the Altar For?

It is not an altar of sacrifice. Egypt would not be the place for that. It is an altar of witness, or testimony. Unto what? This. Because of their oppressors, the Egyptians are going to cry out to God, and God is going to send them a great Saviour, Who is going to deliver them. Who then is that coming Saviour? None else but our Lord Jesus Christ. For He is the Only Saviour God is ever again going to send. It was that the Apostles proclaimed: "He shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: Whom the heavens must receive until the times of the restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began." (Acts 3: 20.) The times of the restitution of all things is to be in that very day when God is to send Jesus Christ from Heaven. He must be the great Saviour God is going to send to deliver the troubled Egyptians. A great deliverance it is to be, for it is from that day only God will be able to say: "Blessed be Egypt my people."

Another thing should now be said. It is that, in the days not long before the coming of the great Saviour to deliver Egypt, the purpose of the altar is likely to become

known, no matter what ignorance may have been in regard to it for all time previously. Unless that is so, the altar would hardly ever fulfil the purpose for which it was originally set up. The altar, very evidently, is then to bear witness that God is to send a great Saviour to deliver distressed Egyptians. So that its witness is to be understood. When? At the time when its witness will be specially needed. When the great event is then at hand. Have we not the right here to remember what elsewhere in God's Word finds clear expression: "The wise shall understand." When? "In the time of the End." And our Lord said: "When these things begin to come to pass, look up and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh." So we should now be knowing something about the great altar which is to be a witness unto the fact of our Lord's coming again.

The Great Pyramid.

Of this mighty monument someone has written:

"A tourist travelling through Egypt after having made his first acquaintance with Egyptian life at Alexandria—that great cosmopolitan centre of East and West—and, having visited Cairo with its mosques and bazaars, continues his journey down the Nile, past the ruins of ancient Thebes and Memphis, comes to what are known as the Pyramids of Ghizeh: those monuments of a long-distant past. There are three: the Great Pyramid and two lesser Pyramids. They are monuments of an extraordinary shape, having a large square base with the four sides gradually contracting inwards until a point is reached at the centre at the greatest height.

"Who built them? When were they built? What were they built for? What do they contain? These are questions that would naturally occur to any traveller on seeing them for the first time.

"With regard to the two lesser pyramids, these questions, in the light of modern research and discovery, are easily replied to. They were built by order of the Pharaohs of Egypt of the Nineteenth Dynasty, by the forced labor of the captive Children of Israel, who were flogged to, and at, their work by Egyptian taskmasters. They were designed for royal tombs—the burying-places of the Pharaohs. They were built with cement bricks cased with granite. A single

passage inside led to a chamber—evidently the Royal Tomb. Rameses the Second of the Nineteenth Dynasty, followed by his successor, Menethah (the Pharaoh of the Exodus), were evidently the Pharaohs under whose authority these two pyramids were erected.

"But the Great Pyramid stands unique by itself. It is much more ancient, much better built, and was cased on the outside with polished marble instead of granite. It has several passages and chambers inside. There is no evidence of it ever having been a royal tomb."

Some things have been said of the Great Pyramid that probably never should have been said. We may not forget either that, in the name of Divine Prophecy, many things also have been said that have had but little foundation. Still, such a fact does not affect the supreme importance of the subject. Like that should it be with us, in regard to the Great Pyramid. For that great monument may easily be the foretold altar of witness unto the coming again of our Lord. For it is right in the midst of the land of Egypt this mighty monument surely stands. And if it is not the great altar of witness there seems nothing else in all Egypt that is ever likely to be.

Here are some of the facts about it. Though those desiring much fuller information about the Great Pyramid will surely consult my book, "The Great Pyramid Witness."

Throughout all ages, and among all people, the Great Pyramid of Ghizeh has been the supreme marvel of the world. The more we learn about it the more is our wonder increased. It is claimed that the builder of the Pyramid had better and more exact scientific and astronomical knowledge than we possess even to-day. He succeeded in doing what no modern architect has ever been able to do. This Pyramid is said to be the only building with perfect orientation—that is, its sides face exactly north, south, east and west. To some this may not appear of great importance, but in reality it is a condition most difficult to attain. No other structure has been raised to do it. The Uraniburg Observatory was built under the supervision of the most famous scientist in Europe, and yet, when completed, it was found that its orientation was wrong by five minutes of a degree. The Government of the United States decided to have a perfect point of orientation fixed in Mount Agamen-

ticus, in the State of Maine. The greatest care was exercised, and the most skilled scientists employed. The problem was to be solved by three different processes—the differences of zenith distance, absolute zenith distances, and transits in prime vertical. Yet, in spite of the imposing array of knowledge available, and with all the care taken, the building was found to be about four-hundredth of a second askew. Yet, here have we a tremendous structure, erected over 4000 years ago, when the earth was supposed to be flat, and the sun but a few miles away, built on the lines of a most perfect orientation. What about our wild evolutionary theories now in the face of such an ancient wonder? Some want us to believe we are a rising race, when all the time God says we are fallen, and that we must be born again ever to rise to the heights of eternal salvation.

The Great Pyramid covers an area of thirteen acres, is 486 feet high and 764 feet broad at its base. It is estimated to weigh six million tons, and to remove it would require sixty thousands steam engines, each drawing one hundred tons. There are blocks of stone in it estimated to weigh 880 tons. There are stones in it thirty feet in length, which fit so closely together that you may run a pen-knife over the surface without ever discovering the breaks between them. They were not laid with mortar either. It is claimed that there is now no machinery so perfect that will make two surfaces thirty feet in length which will meet together as these do.

This Pyramid was made to endure. There are three pyramids at Ghizeh, the great one and two smaller ones. The two latter are only imitations of the first, and were intended for sepulchres of the kings who built them. The great one was never intended, nor was it ever used for that purpose. The Great Pyramid was cased originally with polished marble, but the casings of the others were of polished granite. What was the reason? Marble expands very slightly when exposed to heat, and contracts but little when exposed to cold. On the other hand, granite, though harder, and apparently more durable, suffers greatly when exposed to heat and cold. Consequently, the outer stones of the Great Pyramid remained to the end as true as on the day when they were laid. But the granite stones of the smaller pyramids are twisted and broken. The architect of the Great

Pyramid intended it to endure. The early Egyptians believed the earth was square; hence they made no allowance for the earth's curvature in their great buildings.

The builder of the Great Pyramid was aware that the earth was a globe, for the face of the rock on which the mighty structure is built has been carefully bevelled to the ratio of eight inches to the mile, which is now known to be the exact curvature of the earth's surface. With the smaller pyramids no such allowance was made; hence they are broken all over. Not a flaw or crack has developed in the other Pyramid during the more than forty centuries it has stood. The smaller pyramids were constructed according to the ancient Egyptian, profane cubit, but the Great Pyramid was set up by the measure of the sacred cubit, the same as was used in the construction of the Tabernacle in the Wilderness, which was made on plans supplied from Heaven. That the builder used the sacred measure is proved by the fact that in the Queen's Chamber in the interior he has called attention to it. In the east wall there is a niche sunk exactly one cubit away from the centre, and for no apparent reason. In the antechamber another similar mark precisely sets forth the same fact.

This pyramid was not built by Egyptians, but by a race of shepherd kings, hated because they worshipped a different God to that of the Egyptians. There were many reasons for believing that those responsible for the setting up of the Great Pyramid were the people called Philistines, and whom the Bible declares were brought, originally, out of Egypt by God, as were afterwards those of Israel. Melchisedec was one of these, as likely was Job.

The Wonderful Coffer.

What did the Pyramid contain? It was supposed at one time to hold vast treasure. For 3000 years its interior was unknown. Then, after great effort, a way was forced into it. Ultimately it was discovered to have a descending passage leading down to a pit, and an ascending passage leading through a giant gallery to what is called the King's Chamber, which has beneath it another called the Queen's Chamber. What was found in it after all the weary labor of getting in? Nothing! Only an empty stone coffer. Yet here is a significant fact. The capacity of this coffer is said

to be exactly equal to that of the sacred ark of the covenant, which was associated with the Tabernacle in the worship of the ancient Israelites.

This clearly gives the key to the whole symbolism of the Pyramid. That coffer is related in a hundred different ways to its various chambers; it is also related to the ark of the covenant; therefore, it is also believed that the rest of the Pyramid is also related to the ark and to the Word of God.

The Interior.

For what purpose, then, was this mighty monument set up? This is a great question. Ancient Egypt is filled with monuments that are covered over with hieroglyphics, which, in every one of them, ostentatiously proclaims their purpose. And it is only since the discovery of the ancient Rosetta Stone, A.D. 1799, on which is writing conveying similar expression in three languages—hieroglyphics, Greek and the common language of the people—that the writing on old Egyptian monuments could be read. But, here is the remarkable feature in regard to the greatest of all Egypt's monuments, the Great Pyramid. It contains not one word of hieroglyphic, nor anything else either. The wonderful discovery that has been made is, that in its huge structure the language of its message is conveyed through a mathematical measurement, absolutely exact to the last possible fraction. Was this six million tons weight structure set up to be a tomb? Never! For the interior passages were found to have portcullis blocks of stone so closing up the entrances as to make absolutely impossible the conveyance of coffins anywhere towards the interior. Nor was coffin or body ever found inside it. The later imitation pyramids were clearly built for tombs, as within them have been found mummified remains. But never a relic of this sort has been seen within the precincts of the Great Pyramid.

For 3000 years it was sealed up. Not even the entrance was known. When in A.D. 825 the men employed by Mamoud Pasha to break into it to obtain the treasure, until then imagined to be somewhere inside, they began digging through some considerable distance away from the proper entrance, which was only afterwards discovered.

What the diggers found was, first, a long, inclined, descending passage, 180 feet in length, 44 inches wide,

42 inches high, leading away down into a rough, unfinished pit, dug into the rock. About one-third of the distance down was found, in the roof, another ascending passage, some 280 feet in length. Extending for 130 feet, the dimensions were found to be the same as the descending passage; then, for the last 150 feet, the height was seen to be seven times greater than in the first portion. This higher part has been called the Grand Gallery. At the top of it there is a large step 36 inches high. From then on the floor proceeds horizontally, though immediately a low passage has to be traversed to a high chamber called the Ante-Chamber. Then follows another low passage which leads into what is called the King's Chamber. At the beginning of the Grand Gallery was discovered another horizontal passage which led straight into a chamber, which is now named the Queen's Chamber.

The Passages.

The meanings that are understood concerning the strange and mysterious passages that run all through the building can only here be mentioned.

The descending passage, as far down as the first ascending passage, is understood to represent the history of the human race, from the days of Noah to the Exodus of Israel out of Egypt. The descending passage right down to the Pit is thought to represent the downward career of all mankind in all its idolatry and sin.

The first ascending passage in its early portion is believed to represent Jewish history from the Exodus to the birth of the Messiah. The length of this passage is about 130 feet, which roughly corresponds to the time between the Exodus and the Advent of our Lord. At this point the Ascending Passage opens out into the Grand Gallery, which would seem to represent the Christian Dispensation, with its present resurrection experience possible in every true Christian life, and culminating with resurrection glory at the Advent of Christ.

The Well is thought to be symbolic of the awful experience of the Jews, which culminated with the destruction of Jerusalem, after our Lord's crucifixion. The Pit is believed to represent the lowest depth of all human woe and death.

The Queen's Chamber is understood to symbolise Sabbath Rest, and the horizontal passage leading to it may represent the continued history of the Jews, who go on worshipping God, but who have not accepted the glorious liberty that comes through the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The Great Step, at the head of the Grand Gallery, is considered to have connection with the calling up of the Church to meet the Lord in the heavens, while the Ante-Chamber may depict Daniel's missing week of years, in which occurs the Great Tribulation.

The King's Chamber, to which the Ante-Chamber leads, thus would represent the great consummation of all Divine revelation, the inauguration of the Kingdom of Heaven in this world, along with the Millennial reign of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In all of this we must remember what God through Jeremiah had said: "The Lord has set signs and wonders in the land of Egypt even unto this day." (Jer. 22: 20.)

The Pyramid's Witness.

The Great Pyramid seems to tell of the commencement of human history, the very day of the giving of the law of God to Israel, the time of our Lord's birth, and His death and resurrection; also the beginning of the Christian Dispensation. The very day and hour of the commencement and also the termination of the Great War have also seemed to be indicated, and, if its witness can be accepted, the Great Pyramid also proclaims the solemn fact that this world is now in a short period of truce that must soon be ended by the beginning of a world agony which only will terminate with the appearing of Christ in glory.

Britain and Egypt.

Egypt is again an independent kingdom. That is a fact of deep significance. Still is Britain over Egypt dominant. That also is significant. Just as Britain holds Mandate, under the League of Nations, over Palestine and over the whole of the territory that was given by the Creator to the descendants of Abraham as an everlasting possession, so does Britain continue to hold a strange dominance in regard to Egypt. The Rev. D. M. Panton gives most valuable information in this connection. He says:

"The critical factor in England's mastering Egypt, and thus becoming the Empire of the South, was the creation of the Suez Canal, a vital nexus of her Empire as the Highway to India, and which therefore excludes, except by the fall of the British Empire, all others from the monarchy of the South. Her grip on Egypt, beginning in the dual control of 1882, has culminated in the restoration of a local King of the South, while the real monarch resides at Windsor; exactly as we find that the King of the South—who is never called the King of Egypt, though Egypt is named three times in the Prophecy (Dan. 11:42, 43)—comes into the realm of the King of the South—for Egypt is a part of his Empire—but 'shall return into his own land.'

"Britain's mighty Empire, now grasping the million square miles of the Sudan—the Libyans and Ethiopians are swallowed up by the all-devouring King of the North at the end (Dan. 11:43)—and, in the extreme South, holding South Africa and Australia; and sweeping away into the great Southern Empire of Hindustan covers the utmost limits of the Negeb. Cairo, Khartoum, Delhi, Capetown, Melbourne—Britain to-day is the one unchallenged mistress of the South, no less than Russia is the master portent of the North.

"The pivot around which the conflicts rage being Palestine, the fulcrum on which the Southern Kingdom rests, and strategically must rest, is Egypt, the oldest surviving nation in the world, and a nation that has sprung back into a prosperity the Pharaohs never knew. Lord Cromer and Sir John Aird, putting ten thousand laborers and eight hundred stone-cutters to work, built the Assuan Dam, the biggest wall ever constructed by human hands, with a storage of 1,200,000,000 cubic metres of water, as at this moment twenty-five thousand workmen are erecting the Samnar Dam, at the Sudan, to block 10,000,000,000 gallons daily flow of the Blue Nile, at a cost of £12,500,000.

"Egypt's entire irrigation, as Sir Andrew Wingate has said, has restored the land beyond all the dreams of the Pharaohs. That God is in it would seem proved by the remarkable summary of a great London journal: 'Marvellous and almost incredible as Lord Cromer's Egyptian career appears upon the surface, posterity, with all the secret documents before it, will consider his success as outside the

sphere of human performance.'—('Daily Chronicle,' May 6, 1907.) So in Egypt is a critically situated stage being set for the last drama.

A Military Base.

"For the Great War has revealed the critical value of Egypt in war. 'The potentialities of Egypt as an offensive base,' says Colonel Repington, 'are not yet understood. Protected by the deserts and the sea, Egypt is a priceless jewel to an Oceanic Empire which possesses maritime preponderance and owns great possessions in Africa and the East. Egypt is an ideal base for all our operations on the eastern shores of the Mediterranean.'—('Times,' December 28, 1926.) The actual aid given to Britain during the war was immensely greater than we could have imagined. 'In the Labor Corps and Camel Corps Egypt maintained over 100,000 auxiliaries in the Palestine and other theatres of war, and though the killed were few the casualties from disease were heavy. Moreover, as the term of enrolment in the Labor Corps was short, recruiting was continuous; so that, first and last, approximately 1,000,000 Egyptians served with the British Army. And without any sign of opposition from its inhabitants the whole country was turned into a vast British base, from which the Dardanelles and Palestine expeditions were organised, and through which Salonika and Mesopotamia possess lines of communication.'—('Times,' September 3, 1919)."

By REV. W. LAMB.

I have ventured to include this copious quotation because of its deep importance, and also because, with all the other things already considered, there is strong indication implied regarding the nearness of the Second Advent of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The time for the wonderful event seems now right near. Every believer may soon be caught up from the earth to meet the Blessed Lord in the Heavens. Are you ready for the great translation? One shall be taken, the other left. You are not ready, if you have not believed in Jesus Christ

as your only Saviour from sin. He was wounded for your transgressions. He was bruised for your iniquities. He loved you and gave Himself for you: God has set Him forth to be the propitiation through faith in His blood that your sins may be for ever remitted. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shall be saved. Doing that, you can wait with calmness the solemn events of the time that is near.

CHAPTER XV.

The Sign of the Evolutionist

"They shall turn away their ears from the Truth, and shall be turned unto fables." (2 Tim. 4: 4.)

These are about the last words we have from the Apostle Paul. In verse six he writes: "The time of my departure is at hand." There is an intense solemnity in all that is said. "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, Who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His Kingdom; preach the Word." So that it is a most solemn injunction that is thus given. For it is before God and the Lord Jesus Christ the whole appeal is made. The Judgment Seat of Christ and the actual appearing of the Lord and the setting up of the kingdom are all well in view. And everything said relates to preaching—"Preach the Word!"

That is, preach God's Word. This is the same as the Holy Scriptures which Timothy had been taught from a child, and which are able to give wisdom unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. Paul there also affirms that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God. The Apostle Peter also called the Scripture the Word of the Lord, which endureth for ever, and concerning the giving of which the same Apostle likewise affirmed that it "came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." That only is why the Bible is called the Word of God. It is not the word of men, seeing that holy men only spake it as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

Why the Apostolic Earnestness?

The explanation is clearly given: "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers,

having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the Truth, and shall be turned unto fables."

Very different is all this to the false view abroad that people will more and more become willing to receive the Truth of God. Only the exact opposite to that was ever foretold to be. "Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. In the last days perilous times shall come." "They shall turn away their ears from the Truth and shall be turned unto fables."

What is a fable? It is a fiction, a fraud, a deception. Here is seen the terrific responsibility of those who hear the Truth of God preached. For the Apostle declares that those who turn away from it shall be turned unto fables. This is precisely like what the Apostle wrote to the Thessalonians. "They received not the love of the Truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie."

It is amazing! People will actually come to prefer fables to the Truth of God. The time will come when, having deliberately rejected Divine Truth, they will come to be turned. That is, having gone so far in their refusing of the Gospel, men and women will seem to come under an influence by which they will be turned unto fables. They are thus to become as children, "tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive." And it is to be in the last days, specially, that such conditions are going then to be seen.

We are in the last days now! Whatever the days before ours may have been, everything now happening all around us very clearly shows that we are now in the long-foretold Time of the End. The last days are right upon us. And the religious fables we now see men and women everywhere receiving in preference to the sweet simplicities of the Divine Gospel are really such that anything more senseless can hardly be imagined. Contrast the evolutionary theory of man's origin with the dignified description that is given in the Bible, and at once is realised why the Apostle said of men and women that in the last days "they shall turn away their ears from the Truth, and shall be turned unto fables."

How Man Came.

The statement of God's Word is clear. "God created man in His own image." There is a majesty in that description that, in contrast with the evolutionary hypothesis, is really thrilling.

"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. . . . God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He them. . . . The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul. . . . God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion. And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the Garden of Eden to dress it and keep it."

That is a condensed description of the Divine account of man's origin as it is given in the book of Genesis. Bring that up alongside the evolutionist's account in regard to the beginning of everything and the contrast is amazing. Here is what Darwin wrote in his "Descent of Man," ii., 372:

"Man is descended from a hairy quadruped, furnished with a tail and pointed ears, probably arboreal in its habits and an inhabitant of the Old World. This creature, if its whole structure had been examined by a naturalist, would have been classed among the Quadrumana, as surely as would the common and still more ancient progenitor of the Old and New World monkeys. The Quadrumana and all the higher mammals are probably derived from an ancient marsupial animal, and this through a long line of diversified forms, either from some reptile-like or some amphibian-like creature, and this again from some fish-like animal."

Now, it is simply on the basis of Darwin's description, as is thus stated, what is called modern scholarship has been working ever since. Whatever the later account of the origin of man's being that has since been offered, it is always almost entirely in harmony with that. Here is the latest as presented by the Jordan-Kellogg School, considered of very high modern authority. Though in the reading of such things we always have to remember that we are ex-

pected to receive what is stated without the least iota of substantial proof. It is presumed to be enough that what is called "science" has spoken. Neither may we forget that an entirely new pedigree regarding man's evolutionary development may before long be under offer, for the ground is constantly being shifted. At anyrate, here is the very latest scientific lineage regarding our race. I ask you to compare it with that of God's Word:

"Man.
Anthropoids.
Old World Monkeys.
Lemurs.
Marsupials.
Reptiles.
Amphibians.
Lung-bearing Fish.
Lamphrey or Lancet (something like an eel).
Worms.
Hydra or Volvox.
Amoeba.
Plasm."

That is the latest order of man's descent, according to modern scholarship. So absurd is it that it would be folly for God's dear people to take the least notice were it not for the fearful effect the amazing fable is having upon all Christian testimony, and were it not that by examining such arrogant modern assumption we can plainly see it all to be a definite sign of the times, which surely indicates the nearness of the second advent of the Lord from Heaven. For is it not a distinct evidence that, having turned themselves from the Truth of God, the great ones are surely being turned unto fables?

A very terrible thing has here to be said: It is that because of the presumptuous arrogance that is always associated with this evolutionary theory very many Christian ministers have been swept right off their feet and into rationalism. For not to accept the amazing theory of evolution is to be deemed without learning. It is even imperiously asserted that the majority of scholars have now accepted this theory, so that it has now come to be an assumption of many of the leaders in the Christian Church that if a preacher is not an evolutionist he is not a scholar.

Thus it is that certain books are eagerly read, while the earlier chapters of Genesis come to be discarded for the theory of the evolutionist regarding man's origin, so that the minister thus becomes "a scholar." At anyrate, he is an evolutionist. Not that he ever can have become such through personal observation. He has read one or two books. Perhaps in certain classes the text books put into his hands were what affected him. On his knowledge of what was in these text books depended success in examinations. And here is now the appalling condition. It is evolution that is now unashamedly taught through all the schools. The student unwilling to receive what, after all at its very best, is rank speculation has but little chance of success. The soul-destroying theory is even being forced upon the children in our homes. A recent work, specially for the young, has had a large circulation. It is called "The Children's Encyclopaedia," and here is one of its statements regarding the evolution of man:

"Once all the creatures lived in the seas and rivers. Some lived in shells. Others were soft things like jelly and had no backbones. These had the sea to themselves for a very long time. But during this time they were growing into separate families, unlike those which had gone before. Proper fish began to swim about, and there were great sea scorpions, as big as a tall man, and fishes with skins made like armor.

"After these there grew up great creatures which could live in the water or out of the water, as the hippopotamus can to-day. Then came enormous reptiles. We have nothing living now like the reptiles which by slow degrees came into existence millions of years ago. . . . From some of the flying monsters came the birds, and still later came animals, which, instead of scales, had hair to cover them. . . . Little by little the animals and the birds changed until they became the kind of creatures that are now living, and then millions of years after the lower animals came Man.

"It seems very hard to believe that the birds, with their lovely plumage and their sweet song, came from ugly reptiles."—p. 28.)

"Think of the humming bird, that tiny beauty, not much bigger than a good-sized bee, and remember that

it is descended from a monster called the Igeanodon, which had a great head like a lizard a yard in length. It had a great tail and enormous hind legs, with shorter ones in front; and when it reared itself on its hind legs the height of his head from the ground was fourteen feet."

Thus is given for the instruction of young children the modern evolutionary account of man's origin. It is at once seen to be practically the same as that stated by Darwin and adapted by the Jordan-Kellogg School, and all the others as well, for, after all, there is but little real originality apparent among these fable exploiters. But, to me, it seems nothing short of diabolical this putting of such humbug into the hands of young children, at the same time as they are being taught, by their religious instructors, the supposed unreliability of the early chapters of Genesis. I can hardly imagine anything more wicked. For it destroys the very roots of faith in regard to the Holy Scriptures, which the Apostle Paul has said are alone able to make men wise unto salvation.

Is it any wonder then we should be told of how in the United States a State Senator and his wife recently had a week-end party of 27 girls from a State college where evolution is taught, and, having talked with them on the subject of the Bible and Christianity, to their utter amazement found that twenty-one of them did not believe in God and scoffed at the Bible, five of them were non-committal and only one out of the twenty-seven stood boldly for the teachings of her father and mother? Yet every one of the twenty-seven had come from Christian homes!

Nor is it strange to read from the 1928 report of the American Association for the Advancement of Atheism of one Californian college that has a club called the Hedonic Host of Hell-bent Heathen, which numbers 35 members out of 300 students, and was hoping to have 100 by the end of the year.

Neither should it be thought strange that the "Brown Daily Herald," the organ of the Brown University (Providence, R.I.), in an editorial, should have to say that the practice of "drinking and drunkenness at university social events on this campus has all but killed the social prestige which Brown once held for years among Eastern colleges."

The large prisons of the United States and throughout all Christendom as well are now largely crowded up with youths. What is the cause? Only, surely, the destruction of faith in regard to Divine Revelation, and its consequent subversion of all moral principle in regard to young life. For, as we shall later see, the acceptance of the evolutionary theory regarding the origin of everything surely destroys effective faith in regard to the entire Bible. Young children are really expected to drink in the evolutionary nonsense, as it is ladled out to them, in such publications as the Children's Encyclopaedia, as if the things said were more sure than is the Gospel of Jesus Christ, when as a matter of fact they are based entirely on the crazy assumption of a philosophy which in these last days, having turned away from the Truth of God, has now been turned unto fable. Of course the children do not know that, and therein is the shame of it all.

The Fable Expanded.

We have seen what Darwin and others have said as to the origin of man. An unsupported fable the whole thing surely is, but it is when we come to consider the manner in which others get to develop the theory that the folly of the ungodly assumption becomes so very apparent. Professor Edward Clodd in his book, "The Making of Man," tells how an ape was changed into a man largely by learning to throw things with his feet. On page 126 Clodd says: "While some for awhile remained arboreal in their habits (that reference is to the apes that preceded man, according to the evolution theory), never moving easily on the ground, although making some approach to upright motion, as seen in the shambling gait of the man-like apes, others developed a way of walking on their hind legs which entirely set free the fore limbs as organs of handling and throwing. Whatever were the conditions which permitted this, the advantage which it gives is obvious. **It was the making of a man.**"

It can be seen at once that there is not one tiny scrap of proof available for such extraordinary nonsense as is here set forth in regard to the origin of man. Everything is essentially imaginary, based largely on the amazing

assumption that there are apes which have a shambling gait like unto that which some men now have.

And I am asking my readers to notice that such things are among the very best things the evolutionists are able to produce. If there were anything more convincing it would surely be brought forward.

In his book, "The Destiny of Man," Professor Morris, another evolutionist, gives even a more detailed description of the presumed ancestor of the human race. He says: "It was probably much smaller than existing man, little if any more than four feet in height, and not more than half the weight of man. Its body was covered, though not profusely, with hair; the hair of the head being woolly or frizzly in texture and the face provided with a beard. The face was not jet black, like a typical African, but of a dull brown color; the hair being somewhat similar in color. The arms were long and lank, the back being much curved, the chest being flat and narrow, the abdomen protruding, the legs rather short and bowed, the walk a waddling motion somewhat like that of a gibbon. It had deep-set eyes, greatly protruding mouth with gaping lips, huge ears and general 'ape-like' aspect."

Now, my readers, can anything more absurd ever be imagined than all of this suggestion of a learned man concerning the presumed nearest progenitor of the human race? It seems almost past belief that anyone can now be found, in the name of "science," to advance such nonsense. What is here is an entirely imaginary creature, concerning which the set of his eyes, the color and nature of his hair, height, walk and everything is given of one who, according to the evolutionary theory, must have lived millions of years ago, and has not left behind him a single token, yet is the description simply that of such a baboon as may now be seen caged in any zoo anywhere. We are really asked, in the name of modern scholarship, to accept such a creature as being the most immediate progenitor of the human family. Was there ever before offered to men a more extraordinary fable regarding his genealogical record?

The Missing Link.

Though it is when we come to consider the absurd efforts that are being made to establish evidence of there being some kind of a missing link between man and the baboon that the senseless character of the evolutionary fable really becomes most evident. One of these may here be referred to as typical of quite a large number of other ridiculous expeditions that have before been made. This one, financed by evolutionists, set out last year for the Gobi desert in Asia in order there to find the missing link. As will be seen from the following, a leading New York scientist had suggested the possibility of that being the very place where the wonderful discovery was likely to be made. What we now read is what was stated regarding it by the Associated Press:

"The Central Asiatic Expedition, led by Roy Chapman Andrews, has obtained much interesting fossil material in the Gobi Desert, but up to May 5 had discovered no ancient human or higher ape remains, according to a letter of that date written by Mr. Andrews to Dr. Henry Fairfield Osborn, President of the American Museum of Natural History.

"In the letter received here yesterday Mr. Andrews said it was hoped that primate remains would be found in the rich fossil beds then being dug. The Associated Press on Tuesday received a message from the explorer reporting 'great success,' but giving no details.

"One of the chief purposes of the expedition is to seek fossil materials which would confirm the theory of Dr. Osborn that conditions in Central Asia several million years ago developed an erect, big-brained creature, with competent hands and a fine pair of eyes, which later shed its fur and its stump of a tail, found its voice and became a human being. According to Dr. Osborn, the Gobi plateau is the oldest large dry land area and is the original home of most of the main lines of animals. In the beginning it provided a lush and comparatively safe environment, but gradually grew bare and difficult, forcing the early ancestor to use its brain more and more in order to get along."

So over there at Gobi the evolutionists have dug away for many months, as they have previously done in other places, but not a link connecting man with the monkey

ever has been found, and never can be, for never such a thing has ever been. Often has it happened that pretence has been made of a something having been discovered. The whole world has been told of it. Learned articles have been concocted and astonishing efforts made to bolster up the illusion, though the ultimate failure is never really confessed. The methods adopted in regard to such matters are never really overscrupulous. For example, a small piece of the top part of a skull bone was found somewhere. From this one piece of bone the evolutionists proceeded to construct the whole head, face, nose and everything. It certainly was not a thing of even beastly beauty they produced, though it certainly looked a long way more ape than man. The entire thing, of course, was altogether imaginary, yet was it announced as being real scientific achievement.

There was also the notorious "Piltdown man," concerning which so much noise was made at the time in the newspapers. In a gravel pit in Sussex, England, near Piltdown Common, were found two or three bits of skull bone, a piece of jawbone and a canine tooth. These fragments were not all found on the same spot, nor by the same person, neither at the same time. They were scattered far apart in the gravel pit, and were picked up at intervals of years. The few scraps were put together by the evolutionists and announced to the world as being a new genus, which certainly it was, for never such a creature had the world ever known before. They called it the "Dawn Man," and named it "Dawsoni," after an English scientist. But another evolutionist, Professor Arthur Keith, took up the same fragments and made of them an entirely different creature altogether, while Professor Hrdlicka discovered that the Piltdown jaw and tooth did not belong to the fragment of skull at all, but "really belonged to a chimpanzee." So what do you think of all that in the name of science?

Another Great Hoax.

Here is what Dr. Stratton, of New York, said of an incident similar to that just given: "As for the 'Java ape-man,' the case is even worse. Dr. Eugene Dubois, a Dutch physician, claimed to have found these bones in the island of Java in 1891, but scientists have been suspicious

about the genuineness of the find. There are only three fragments of this gentleman—the Java, or Trinil, Ape-man, who has been given the overwhelming name of 'Pithecanthropus.' There is part of a skull, a part of a femur bone, and one molar tooth. The bones were not found at the same time or altogether in one place. The femur bone was found a year after the bit of skull was picked up. The bones were scattered far apart in a gravel pit on the bank of a rushing stream. The femur bone was fifty feet from where the skull was found. When Dr. Dubois found these pitiful bits of bones he announced his belief that they belonged to a being between the man-apes and man.

"Other scientists, however, who examined these bones asserted that these fragments did not belong to the same individual at all. The geologist Dana took the position that the bones, if they belonged to the same individual, belonged to a low-grade man or an idiot. Virchow rejected them, and finally another authority of the first rank, Professor Klaatsch, of Heidelberg University, declared that the creature was no missing link at all."

Yet here is a very strange thing, and something that seems far from being honest. In New York there is a fine Museum of Natural History, in which there is a large room called "The Hall of the Age of Man." In this are presented all sorts of exhibits with the intention of showing people the evolution of man from the lower animals. Professor Osborne and those with him have taken such small pieces of bones as have been found and made up astonishing creatures, which are suggested to be links that connect man with monkeys. Those few spurious Java bones, already mentioned, have been made up into an imaginary creature and are shown to school children as being a link in the evolutionary ascent of man. Why, Madame Tassaud could have done ever so much better in her waxworks exhibition! But it certainly does seem a great shame that public money can thus be adroitly used in subverting the faith of children in God's Word. For that surely is what this kind of thing really means. But the astonishing character of the fable unto which unbelieving men and women have now been turned can be here easily realised. For all the fossilised bones thus found could comfortably be put into one small basket. They are claimed to be at least 500,000 years old,

yet they are presented to the world as being true relics of "missing links" that exist between the baboon and man. That is, the scientists would have the world believe that for 500,000 years, amid all the changes of climate and condition, and through earthquake, fire, flood and everything else that has been, such bones lay undisturbed, in certain instances, beside what is now a rushing stream. It is all amazing.

Follies of Unbelief.

There really can be no more vivid illustration of the follies of unbelief possible than is now to be seen in regard to the evolution fable. Having rejected what is made known through God's Word they are constrained to adopt all manner of astonishing theories to justify their scholarship. It may all be unconsciously done, but there it is, anyway. For example, here is Darwin, having suggested the proposition, that man's brain is superior to woman's brain, offering, the explanation that man's special intellectual powers came, through as a brute his having to fight for the female he preferred. Then forgetting, apparently, that he had represented the animal male man as selecting the females, he afterwards went on to say that the females selected the males that had least hair on their bodies, and in this way the human body came ultimately to be without hair.

It is also equally astonishing the theories that are put forth by evolutionists regarding various features of the human body. For example, the eye came along just by chance. The earlier animals had no eyes. One of them happened one day to discover a piece of pigment or freckle on one part of the skin. The sun's rays began to converge on that very freckle, so making it to feel warmer just there than on anywhere else in the whole body. This produced an irritation, and the irritation produced a nerve, and the nerve developed into an eye. Then came another freckle, the right distance away, and another eye surely followed on by the same process.

W. J. Bryan showed that such a statement of evolutionary belief was no libel on evolutionists by quoting from the book, "The Meaning of Faith," by Dr. Fosdick, a prominent Baptist preacher in the United States. This is what this evolutionist preacher said: "Man has grown up

in this universe, gradually developing his powers and functions as responses to his environment. If he has eyes, so the biologist assures us, it is because light waves played upon the skin and eyes came out in answer; if he has ears it is because the air waves were there first, and the ears came out to hear. Man never yet, according to the evolutionist, developed any power save as a reality called it into being. There would be no fins if there were no water, no wings if there were no air, no legs if there were no land."

This must indeed be realised as being amazing teaching on the part of a man who is looked upon as being one of America's foremost preachers. Yet the people love it to be so. No wonder the Holy Spirit, through Paul, in view of these last days, caused it to be written: "Preach the Word, be instant in season, out of season, for the time will come when turning away from the Truth, they shall be turned unto fables." What Dr. Fosdick here says certainly proves the Apostle's word, and also confirms what has already been suggested in the present chapter, that preachers are not evolutionists through personal observation, but only because of what other men, unbelievers, have said. Dr. Fosdick says of all this nonsense, he has thus provided with fine artistic literary expression, that it is "according to the biologist."

Another guess of the evolutionists in regard to the development of limbs is not any less ludicrous than is the other. This is what happened: A wart came on the body, the little animal discovered that the wart could be used to work the body along, and went on using it until it became a leg, then it ceased to develop any more. Another wart came on the other side of the body of man's progenitor, just in the right place, and so another leg came to be. Of course there is an unexplained problem in regard to those animals who went on to develop more than two legs.

I trust my readers will understand I am giving them only what is the belief of evolutionists in regard to origins. My desire is that all may realise the enormity of this fable which men of learning have now come to receive, having turned away their ears from the sublime truth of God's Word.

Speaking of birds, Graebner, in his book, "Evolution," quoting from the "Home Geography for Primary Grades,"

says: "Ever so long ago their grandfathers were not birds at all. Then they could not fly, for they had neither wings nor feathers. These grandfathers of our birds had four legs, a long tail and jaws with teeth. After a time feathers grew upon their bodies and their front legs became changed for flying. These were strange looking creatures. There are none living like them now." There certainly are not, and there never have been such living, either, only in the imagination of the evolutionist.

Mr. Bryan mentions that not long ago a professor in a Pennsylvania college explained to an audience in Philadelphia that we dream of falling because our ancestors fell out of trees fifty thousand years ago; but he says we never dream of being hurt when we fall—his explanation being that those who fell and were killed had no descendants, and that we must, therefore, have descended from those who fell and were not killed.

Another distinguished scientist announced that the great day in history was the day when a water puppy crawled upon the land, and, deciding to remain there, became a land animal, and man's first progenitor. While a prominent scientist in France is said to have communicated with the soul of a dog and found that the dog was happy. Have ever such fables as are these ever before been believed? And yet the most astonishing feature of our time is this: The man who refuses to accept such amazing twaddle is called an ignoramus and an "obscurantist." His offence really is that he still earnestly believes the satisfying record the Great God has given in regard to man's origin and history on the page of the Holy Word. The unbelieving evolutionist has sought to make this nauseating theory regarding evolution as beautiful as possible in such expression as follows:

"A fire-mist and a planet,
A crystal and a cell,
A jellyfish and a saurian,
And caves where the cavemen dwell.
Then a glimpse of law and beauty
And a face turned from the sod:
Some call it evolution
And others call it God."

But all of that is simply the statement of an embellished heathenism. As different is it from the Bible account as the darkness of midnight is from the bright clear light of noonday, especially as is seen in the genealogy of our Lord as it is stated in the lineage of Mary, as it is given in Luke three: "Which was the son of Noah, which was the son of Lamech, which was the son of Methusela, which was the son of Enoch, which was the son of Maleleel, which was the son of Enos, which was the son of Seth, which was the son of Adam, WHICH WAS THE SON OF GOD." That is, the Bible takes our genealogy right back to God. But the evolutionist wants to take it back to slime.

Evolution a Heathenism.

This statement can be proven. The theory of evolution began with the Greek philosophers, the wisdom of which, the Apostle Paul said, God was going to destroy. The Greek philosophers knew nothing of the Divine account of creation. They sought by speculation to explain things as they are. They proposed the theory of spontaneous generation. Anaximander conceived the earth at first as covered with water, which in part dried up, and then from the waters life appeared on dry ground. This ancient writer believed that air, with the aid of the sun, caused all life to spring out of the slime of the seashore. This primordial life held within itself the inherent quality of being transformed into varied forms. There were many varieties of expression in regard to these things among the Greek philosophers, just as there now is among modern evolutionists, but the basis was always the same.

Then came out to the world the Gospel of Christ, the sound of which reached out everywhere. The Bible was put into the hands of all men. Heathen philosophy concerning the origin of things was swamped by the clear revelation of God's Word. Many centuries went past, and then Charles Darwin stood forward with his "Evolution of Species." Hegel, Haeckel and others followed on, and those who were turning away from the Truth of God came to receive again the old heathen fable, only in its more modern presentation, though the same in essence. It is all of it based on guesswork, though many good people do not know that. Yet it is simple conjecture through and through.

Another reference to the Darwins will surely prove what is now being said. This instance is found in a little collection of what is called "Savoyard" and other letters, in the MS. in the British Museum. Here is a quotation from Erasmus Darwin's "Botanic Garden": "I am acquainted with a philosopher who, contemplating this subject, thinks it not impossible that the first insects were anthers and stigmas of flowers which had by some means loosed themselves from the parent plant, and that many insects have gradually, in long process of time, been formed from these; some acquiring wings, others fins, and others claws from their ceaseless effort to procure food or to secure themselves from injury. The anthers and stigmas are therefore separate beings." Thus was it Charles Darwin began to imagine the first insects originated out of flowers!

Worse Still.

We have already seen how the supposed "missing links" have been constructed by the evolutionist scientists That is indeed really nothing better than manufactured prevarication. There is also something else. It is that even some of the more prominent of evolutionists have not always been found to be entirely scrupulous in their other methods. For example, Ernest Haeckel was actually found out in schematising and forging certain diagrams by which he was seeking to prove his evolutionary theory. He was put on trial by the Jena University Court and the charge against him was proved by the Court. This was what he said in reply:

"I should feel utterly condemned and annihilated by the admission, were it not that hundreds of the best observers and most reputable biologists lie under the same charge. The great majority of all morphological, anatomical, histological and embryological diagrams are not true to nature, **but are more or less doctored, schematised and reconstructed.**"

It was Professor George McReady Price, Professor of Geology in Union College, Nebraska, who said, and no wonder surely after such a confession as we have just read as coming from the lips of one of the most notorious of evolutionists: "The astonishment which I feel is due to the amazing power of a preconceived theory to blind the eyes

and stultify the reasoning power of the shrewdest observer when confronted with a series of facts for which their theory has made no provision."

But it is precisely such a condition that is altogether implied in what the aged Apostle of Christ said: "They shall turn away their ears from the Truth and shall be turned unto fables." The acceptance of fables, instead of Divine Truth, always is demoralising.

Without Foundation.

From everything already said it will surely be realised that the theory of evolution as to the origin of things is entirely without real foundation. Of it, Sir William Dawson, the great geologist of Canada, said: "It is one of the strangest phenomena of humanity; it is utterly destitute of proof." Regarding it, Professor Everett, of Harvard University, says: "Evolution, or this story of transformation and activity, is a dream." As a paleontologist the late Professor Agassiz wrote: "I am compelled to say that the theory is a scientific mistake, untrue in its facts, unscientific in its methods and mischievous in its tendency." Sir William Dawson also wrote of it that "the records of the rocks are decidedly against evolutionists." Dr. Etheridge, Fossiologist of the British Museum, says: "Nine-tenths of the talk of evolutionists is sheer nonsense, not founded on observation and wholly unsupported by facts. This museum is full of proofs of the utter falsity of their views." Professor Fleischman, of Erlangen, as definitely affirms that "the Darwinian theory has in the realms of Nature not a single fact to confirm it. It is not the result of scientific research, but purely the product of the imagination."

Not so very long ago, at the British Association of Science meetings, held at Toronto, Canada, Professor William Bateson, of Cambridge University, one of the world's present leading evolutionary scientists, admitted that discussion on evolution was practically at an end, for morphology and genetics alike had failed to yield any evidence. The changes once claimed were confessedly gratuitous. He said: "Less and less was heard about evolution in genetical circles, and now the topic was dropped. When a student in other sciences asks us what is now cur-

rently believed about the origin of species we have no clear answer to give. Faith has given place to agnosticism."

Changing Ground.

What is called science is always having to change its ground. The "latest results" of yesterday have to-day to be laid aside. This has often before been seen in regard to geology. Professor Price, of Union College, Nebraska, has been collecting material for twenty years for a new book, recently published, which he calls "New Geology." In this he argues that the entire science of geology will have to be made all over on a new and scientific basis. He shows from facts gathered in every part of the world, accompanied by adequate diagrams, tables and beautiful illustrations, that the arrangement of the different sorts of rocks by the older geologists is not only a purely artificial and arbitrary scheme, but that the facts that have been discovered since that artificial arrangement of the rocks was worked out utterly overthrow the whole scheme. He gives much valuable information—too vast in its description to be mentioned here—but everything stated shows how false are the premises made for evolution on the basis of geology. The definite conclusion of Professor Price's great book is absolutely against any possible evolutionary theory. This is his conclusion: "The net results of all modern scientific investigation seem to be that the plants and animals now alive could never have originated by any such method of gradual development as has been pictured to us in the name of natural science. Certain it is that modern biology, and geology also, for that matter, have simply developed a complete negative demonstration against the easier assumptions of the earlier scientists that plants and animals probably originated by a gradual progression from the lower types to the higher types by process similar to those which are now going on."

Darwin himself had to admit the unchanging character of all species. His words in this connection were: "There are two or three million of species on earth—sufficient field, one might think, for observation. But it must be said to-day that, in spite of all the efforts of the trained observers, not one change of species into another is on record."

Fifty years later Dr. N. S. Shaler, Department of Geology, Harvard, said: "It begins to be evident that the Darwinian hypothesis is still essentially unverified. It is not yet proven that a single species of the two or three million now inhabiting the earth has been established solely or mainly by the operation of natural selection."

Such testimony as that should shatter for ever any belief in the fable of evolution. For it is certainly in absolute harmony with what is said in the first chapter of Genesis: "And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind."

On the basis of the testimony of such prominent scientists as have been mentioned this is the truest of science. The order of creation was everything after its kind, and so has it continued right on until now. One species never has changed into any other.

All Known History Opposed.

Professor A. H. Syce, of Oxford University, is easily the foremost archaeologist of our times. He says: "Neither in Egypt nor in Babylon has any beginning of civilisation been found. As far back as archaeology can take us man is already civilised, building cities and temples, carving hard stone into artistic form, and even employing a system of picture writing; and of Egypt it may be said, the older the country the more perfect it is found to be. The fact is a very remarkable one, in view of modern theories of development, and of the evolution of civilisation out of barbarism. Whatever may be the reason, such theories are not borne out by the discoveries of archaeology. Instead of the progress we should expect, we find retrogression and decay; where we look for the rude beginning of art, we find an advanced society and artistic perfection. Is it possible that the Biblical view is right after all, and that civilised man has been civilised from the outset? If so, we can no longer go to the savage to learn how our first ancestor lived and thought, for the savage will represent either degeneracy from a higher type or else a different race. In any case, the culture and civilisation of Egypt and Babylonia appear to spring into existence fully developed, as Greek mythology averred that Athene had sprung from the head of Zeus. Arch-

aeology, at all events, has failed to discover the elements out of which, according to the doctrine of evolution, they ought to have grown."

And, says Professor Brugsch: "The farther we go back in Egyptian history the more perfect the works of painting and sculpture." Regarding the palace temple of Karnac, erected 3000 years ago, which one writer says is "perhaps the noblest effort of architectural magnificence ever produced by the hand of man," a gifted author says of it and of Thebes generally: "All here is sublime, all majestic. With pain one tears oneself from Thebes. Her monuments fix the traveller's eyes, and fill his mind with vast ideas. Beholding colossal figures and stately obelisks, which seem to surpass human powers, he says: 'Man has done this,' and feels himself and his species ennobled."

Says Professor Renouf: "Of a state of barbarism, or even of patriarchal life anterior to the monumental period, there is no historical vestige. The earliest monuments which have been discovered present to us the very same fully developed civilisation and the same religion as the later monuments. The blocks of the pyramids bear quarry marks, exhibiting the decimal notation, and are dated by the months of the calendar which was in use down to the latest times."

In the Cairo Museum there is a collection of modelled heads, now one hundred and thirty-two in number, representing the different races and tribes of men and women in that ancient world. All are said to be characterised by that remarkable development of the cartoonist's skill, so peculiarly Egyptian, which enabled artists of that land to catch in each case that personal peculiarity which distinguished one person or people from another. Not in any of these specimens is to be seen the least encouragement for the theory that man then was thousands of years nearer the animal than now. Statues and plaques in the Gizeh Museum also show that the priest mummifiers of Memphis, four thousand years ago, possessed a profound knowledge of anatomy. Excavations in Italy have likewise brought to light scores of finely finished surgical instruments for certain operations, which are in almost every particular of form like those invented in modern times and used by the most advanced surgeons of to-day.

Not superior but rather inferior do conditions now seem to be in regard to many things in the world. Said an architect recently: "We are losing all our secrets in this shabby age. If we keep on the time will come when we will be able to do nothing well. Take for instance steel. We claim to make good steel, yet the blades of the Saracens turned out hundreds of years ago would cut one of our own blades in two like butter. Take ink. Our modern ink fades in five or ten years to rust color, yet the ink of mediaeval manuscripts is as black and bright to-day as it was 700 years ago. Take dyes. The beautiful blues and reds and greens of antique oriental rugs have all been lost, while in Egyptian tombs we find fabrics dyed thousands of years ago that remain to-day brighter and purer in hue than any of our modern fabrics. Take my speciality, buildings. We can't build as the ancients did. The secret of their mortar and cement is lost to us. Their mortar and cement were actually harder and more durable than the stones they bound together, whereas ours—horrors!"

Ancient Civilisations.

Dr. Bingham, of Yale University, shows that the oldest remains of Peruvian civilisation are the most perfect. "The pre-Inca remains are much more interesting and denote a higher condition of civilisation than the Inca relics. No marble could be more exquisitely cut. We learned that the workmanship of these pre-Inca peoples, preceding those whom Pizzarro conquered, exceeded in beauty the work of the Incas of Pizzaro's time."

Not evolution but devolution then is what we find in all human experience. The savage races show precisely the opposite to evolution. Savage peoples are really races in ruins. "The degeneration of the Akkas of Guinea, of the bushmen of South Africa, of the Australian aborigines, and the Fire Islanders is very great, but these barbarian races, representing hundreds of thousands of human creatures, millions of them, are a proof of terrible decay. Without Christianity no race has ever been observed to rise from savage to culture."

On the other hand, by the power of the Gospel, the most degraded tribes of men have risen to the very heights of heaven. From among the first generation of Australian

aborigines, to whom the Gospel of Christ has been taken, have developed the sweetest of Christian graces. The second generation has graduated after a modern university training.

There are savages in the world to-day. As far back as human history goes there were savages. Some of them through the influence of the Christian faith have become civilised. On the other hand, descendants of the most civilised peoples have descended into a savage state. Rawlinson, in his book, "The Origin of Nations," traces the degradation of ancient Greek peoples. The modern Copts are degraded descendants of the ancient Egyptians. Where a real history of any people is found there is always to be seen a clear indication of a previous Golden Age. Ruined cities in Yucatan, New Mexico, and in other lands indicate an age of civilisation far behind the savage conditions found in them by white men, and greatly superior. McCan asks: "Why do the Haeckelites of this generation resort to a row-boat load of mutilated skull-caps, fragments of thigh bones and grossly defective skeletal remnants to support their theory of an ascending evolution from the ape when, here, now, alive in the world, they find countless millions of overwhelming proofs of universal degeneration from the ideal primitive described in the Word: 'And God created man in His own image: in the image of God He created Him'?"

Marvellous.

Consider what Wendell Philips says in his lecture on "The Lost Arts": "You may visit Dr. Abbot's museum, where you will see the ring of Cheops, the pyramid builder. The signet of the ring is about the size of a quarter of a dollar, and the engraving is invisible without the aid of a glass. No man was ever shown into the cabinets of gems in Italy without being furnished with a microscope to look at them. It would be idle for him to look at them without one. He couldn't appreciate the delicate lines and the expression of the faces. If you go to Parma they will show you a gem once worn on the finger of Michelangelo, of which the engraving is two thousand years old, on which there are the figures of seven women. You must have the aid of a glass in order to distinguish the forms at all. . . .

Layard says he would be unable to read the engravings at Nineveh without strong spectacles, they are so extremely small. Rawlinson brought home a stone about twenty inches long and ten wide, containing an entire treatise on mathematics. It would be perfectly illegible without glasses. Now if we are unable to read it without the aid of glasses you may suppose the man who engraved it had pretty strong spectacles. So the microscope, instead of dating from our time, finds its brothers in the books of Moses."

The best literature, the greatest epic poetry, the finest models in art, the most wonderful examples of physical development, the highest moral standards, and the Bible, God's Word, have all come down to us from the earliest times. The fallacy of the evolutionary theory is thus exposed.

Not Evolution, but Devolution.

All history shows it is devolution that has been in all human experience. The Bible, God's Word, confirms precisely that, and only that. The Apostle Paul, in the New Testament, gives the clear record. Speaking of earth's earliest generations, he says: "That which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath showed it unto them. For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse; because that, when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts." (Rom. 1: 19-24.)

The history and experience of every family in regard to the entire human race is right in harmony with everything said in that solemn and Divinely-inspired description of what happened to man. The human family is fallen, not risen, and all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

One of the greatest living Semitic scholars, an Oxford professor, recently said: "The original faith of man was

not fetishism, nor was it pantheism, nor even idolatry. The oldest word for God is 'The Heavenly Father.'" That accords perfectly with the revelation of God made to Adam in the Garden of Eden, and with the contents of the first and second chapters of Genesis, that man did not begin his existence upon the earth with some simian speculations concerning the moon and the stars and other forces of nature, to finally work out the idea first of many gods and later of one God.

Why Evolution?

The evolution theory is really the attempt of unbelief to destroy faith in the Great God as the Creator. The "Century Dictionary and Encyclopedia" defines evolution as "opposed to creationism."

Huxley definitely announced that: "It is clear that the doctrine of evolution is directly antagonistic to that of creation—as applied to that of the world as a whole, it is opposed to that of direct creative volition. Evolution, if consistently accepted, makes it impossible to believe the Bible."

The evolutionist does not really believe the Bible. He cannot. He may think he believes portions of the Bible, but even the portions he thinks he believes are not believed in actual reality. That this is so is quite evident from the effect the acceptance of this theory has had in regard to many of the leaders in the Christian Churches. Those evolutionists in the Churches are the people who are denying the Divine authority of the Sacred Scriptures, and are disowning the Virgin Birth, and the Deity of our Blessed Lord, and the need for blood atonement in regard to sin. What the word of God calls sin the evolutionist really calls the remains of the beast that are not yet quite overcome.

Darwin began life as a professing Christian, but his acceptance of evolution compelled him to discard every vital truth in Christianity. Neitzsche accepted the Darwinian view, that humanity as it is is the resultant of relentless struggle. But to Nietzsche the struggle was hindered by a folly which he called "morality," and more particularly that morality which relates to the Christian Faith. His philosophy aimed at the removal of this

"hindrance," and at the development of what he called "a higher type." He dismissed with scorn what he said was the "shame morality" of Christianity. His "higher type of humanity" was that which would indulge itself in intoxication, sensuality, cruelty and crime not to be repented of. The Great War was widely believed to have resulted through the widespread acceptance of this Nietzsche philosophy throughout Germany. And it is just that must be the logical effect always of the acceptance of such a debasing theory. It is also largely in operation throughout Christendom to-day.

This is the explanation of fearful declension in regard to the power and testimony of the Christian Churches during the last two generations, and especially in more recent years still. The whole Christian enterprise is virtually being paralysed through the effect this awful last-day fable is having in regard to Christian testimony. In his book, "Belief in God and Immortality," Professor James H. Leuba, of Bryn Mawr College, asserts that religion is dying out among the educated in the United States. He sent a questionnaire to the scientists whose names he found in a book which he declares contained the names of practically every scientist of importance. On the basis of answers received he affirmed that half of the prominent scientists do not believe in a personal God or in a personal immortality. That is, they are heathen—having turned away their ears from the Truth they have been turned unto fables, as God's Word, written 1900 years ago, said they would.

Selecting nine representative colleges, Professor Leuba questioned students in the same way. Their answers show that only fifteen per cent. of the freshmen had abandoned Christianity, while thirty per cent. of the juniors and forty to forty-five per cent. of the men who had graduated had discarded the cardinal principles of the Christian Faith. The change toward unbelief was simply due to the influence of the cultured men under whose instruction the students passed.

In his book, "Atheism in our Universities," Fairhurst tells of the young men and young women who have gone from Christian homes, Christian Sunday Schools and Christian Churches into colleges and universities, only to return home barren of faith, cynics, agnostics, or atheists.

These also turn away their ears from the Truth and are likewise turned unto fables, and sometimes unto worse. For one of the leading American religious papers reports, concerning a survey made of a large university, that sixty-two per cent. of the men drank, fifty per cent. gamble, and that only ten per cent. are interested in religion.

Whose Responsibility?

The responsibility is not only that of the college professor. I am afraid it has to be admitted that it is often ministers of religion that largely have popularised the evolutionary fable, as witness the quotation already given from Dr. Fosdick, of New York. A host of other ecclesiastics have been airing their "scholarship" with similar expression. Of these Dr. Barnes, now Bishop of Birmingham, recently said that "there was no special creation of Adam and Eve . . . probably a gradual evolution of a tribal group of monkeys, who slowly began to show a brain development characteristic of humanity."

This high ecclesiastic also informs the world from the episcopal chair that "it now seems highly probable that from some fundamental stuff in the universe the electrons arose. From them came matter. From matter life emerged. From life came mind. From mind, spiritual consciousness was developing. There was a time when matter, life and mind, and the soul of man were not, but now they are. Each has arisen as a part of the vast scheme planned by God." That is, man is now coming up.

But this is all rank, rationalistic speculation! For the materialistic bishop can only say "probably," while Darwin, elaborating this theory, could never go any farther than "We may well suppose," which phrase occurs over eight hundred times in his two principal works.

The real tragedy is that the clerical amateur scientists talk as if all the theories of modern science were all of them absolutely proved conclusions. Neither do they hesitate from the exalted eminence of the Christian pulpit to give expression to a rationality whose only effect ever can be the absolute destruction of real faith in regard to all Divine Truth. The most amazing thing in regard to the evolutionist parson is that he has become entirely unable to see that the acceptance of such a theory really means

the complete negation of every doctrine presented through the Bible. It is the denial of the power of Almighty God. For it gives the absolute lie to what the Deity inspired holy men to write on the first page of the first chapter of Genesis what He did. That is to make man after the Divine image, out of the dust of the earth. It was the Divine Son of God Who said: "God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham." (Matt. 3: 9.) Surely that is enough for simple believers!

The evolutionist also denies man's Fall into sin. He therefore has also to deny the need for sin's atonement. The miraculous has also to be rejected, as has also the Divine inspiration of the Scriptures. Resurrection and the Coming again of the Lord are only subjects for scoffing. How then can the evolutionist parson ever say he believes what is essential in the Bible? He may hoodwink himself, but he cannot beguile the man on the street. That is probably why more than ninety per cent. of the manhood of the nation has left off going to Church. He may imagine he is making religion more acceptable to twentieth century youth; he is only making wider the way to hell. The Bible tells how in "the last days" there will be just such theologians, "deceiving and being deceived." Buddhism, or Theosophy, is the only religion evolutionism harmonises with. The doctrine of reincarnation, with its thousands of opportunities for possibly working upwards in different forms of life, may fit in with evolution, but it is absolutely alien to the religion established on the earth by the Son of God. That Christian ministers can hold to such fable is clearly one of the Signs of the Times. They have turned away from the Truth they were paid to preach. Is it any wonder that they are turned now unto fables?

It is only a question now how long the Creator will continue to permit such travesty of the Divine Revelation. The evolutionists are surely changing the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image like to corruptible man. The God the evolutionist thinks he believes about is a god like unto himself. Just as we have seen happened in the beginning, where God gave the corrupters up, so God is going to do again. Professing themselves to be wise, they also have become fools. If Jesus Christ does not soon come only the merest shred of Christianity will be found. But

He surely is coming. The time seems right near. The time of our departure is at hand. Are we ready for the mighty change? If so, it can be said by each of us: "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the Righteous Judge, shall give me at that Day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing." (II. Tim. 4: 8.)

The Only Hope

is Christ. Faith in the shedding of His blood for our sins brings salvation. "Being justified by faith we have peace with God." You need no other priest or mediator. Draw near to God now through God's Blessed Son. He will receive you and save you to all eternity. Then, indeed, will you go up to be with God.

CHAPTER XVI.

The Sign of the Heathen World

"And this Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come." (Matt. 24: 14.)

Here is a Scripture that has been greatly misunderstood. On its basis, it has been supposed that before the Lord can come the Gospel of Christ unto the salvation of men, must first have been preached unto every person everywhere in the world. Others have gone further and suggested it meant, that actual world conversion is to happen before the end can be here. So that it had come to be assumed, almost generally, that the work of the Church is to convert the world and to cause that the Kingdom of Heaven should be set up over the whole earth. Now, if this were so, it would only have to be sadly confessed that the Church until now has miserably failed, seeing there are now actually hundreds of millions more of people on the earth, that have never heard the Gospel, even once, than when the great commission was first given. And the way religious condition now is, generally, throughout all the world, we could never hope that Jesus Christ was ever to come again, at all, if the mighty event depends on our Gospel being heard by all men. But such a conclusion is based on an entire misunderstanding of what our Lord said, as it is also in regard to the condition of its utterance. It is really not necessary for us to go very deeply into the meaning of what our Lord was saying to recognise that it cannot carry the meaning which has come to be read into it, that it is our Gospel that must be preached to every creature. For the thing mentioned is something which has to be proclaimed, as a witness to nations, not to individuals at all.

And I ask you to carefully notice what that "something" is that is to be thus given as a testimony to nations. Is it the same Gospel which we have to preach now? It surely is not. What is our Gospel called? It is called "The Gospel of Christ," "The Gospel of the grace of God." And what is this Gospel which must be declared as a testimony to all the nations, before the end can come? It is "this Gospel of the Kingdom." That is the same as was proclaimed by John the Baptist before the first presentation of Christ as King. "Repent ye, for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand." It was the same message which our Lord gave to His disciples, but which only was for "the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Matt. 10: 7: "As ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of Heaven is at hand."

This Gospel of the Kingdom is what the disciples had, up to that very time, heard the Lord Himself declare, but to be preached again never any more, until the time there at that time signified.

Right through the land of Israel, only, was this Gospel of the Kingdom preached, but that during only the three and a half years of our Lord's earthly ministry. The conditions under which this Gospel of the Kingdom was to be preached to Israel were entirely different to those under which the Gospel of faith in the finished redemptive work of Jesus Christ, to the whole world, was to be proclaimed. For the one, neither gold, nor silver, and not even brass was to be taken in their purses. Nor scrip for the journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat. "And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, enquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go hence. And when ye come into a house, salute it. And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace return unto you. And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city." (Matt. 10: 9, 15.) The condition of the preacher of the Gospel now is certainly very different to all that.

The Seventy were sent out with precisely the same message, only to the same people, of the same land, and

Luke tells us of their rejoicing return, after they had delivered their message, saying, "Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through Thy name."

Even so was it that same Gospel of the Kingdom, John the Baptist taught, as did the Twelve, the Seventy and the Lord Himself, until the nation to whom it was thus proclaimed, had finally rejected and crucified the King, with a crown of thorns on His head. He knew from the beginning they would do this, and so He prepared His disciples for what was to be. The seven parables of the Kingdom, given in Matt. 13, were, that they should understand the long interval that thus was to be, before the Kingdom should come to have actual inauguration. Other parables, such as the one about the invitation to the marriage of the King's Son, that was sent out into all the highways of human experience were also given to show what was to be during the whole of this Gospel Age. While the transfiguration on the Holy Mount was the presentation in miniature, as it were, in regard to the ultimate visible manifestation of the Kingdom, that yet has to be, for, indeed, such a thing never yet has been realised, and cannot ever be either, until the coming again of the King.

The Final Offering of the King.

This was, in connection with the first Advent, when our Lord rode into Jerusalem and up to the Temple, on the back of an ass and the foal of an ass. The people then went before Him, singing, "Hosanna to the son of David: Blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord; Hosanna in the Highest." But, up at the Temple, the nation's leaders only mocked Him. It was after that, He wept over the city and over the people, and said to them: "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till YE shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." That is until the nation of Israel is ready to receive the King, they will never again see Him. It was then also He told them, that they would "fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the Times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." (Luke 21: 24.)

Never after that was this Gospel of the Kingdom preached again either by Apostle or Lord. Another Gospel came then to be preached. This was after the death, burial, resurrection and ascension of our Redeemer into Heaven. This other Gospel was: "Go into all the world and preach the Gospel (or Glad Tidings) to every creature." What this Gospel actually is, is clearly stated: "He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved." That is something entirely different from that which was spoken to Israel, which was: "The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." Israel rejected the King, and then refused the Kingdom, and, therefore, while it was near at hand then, the offer of the Kingdom was, for the time being, withdrawn, and the disciples of Christ were sent out everywhere to proclaim the Gospel of the love of God, that whosoever believeth in Christ can be saved.

But this Gospel of the Kingdom is again to be preached as a testimony to the nations of the world. When is that to be? Only after the Church has been caught up and the King of kings is about to appear, in order then to set up the Kingdom of Heaven over all the earth. The purposes of God cannot be prevented, though they are sometimes delayed by human folly. The wonderful Kingdom is often described in Old Testament prophecies, and it is for that which we pray every day when we say: "Thy Kingdom come, Thy Will be done on earth as it is in Heaven." Then, at that time, as when the King came and offered Himself the first time, He was preceded by the forerunner, John the Baptist, proclaiming the nearness of the Kingdom, even so when the King is about to appear to the world a second time, His messengers will hurry out to all the nations to give their testimony that the Kingdom of Heaven is now about to be set up, all over the earth.

There will be many forerunners then going out to the world with this thrilling message. I think the one hundred and forty-four thousand sealed ones of the book of Revelation will be among those who are again to declare the Gospel of the coming Kingdom of Heaven. It is through their wonderful testimony, then made possible by the wonderful rapidity of travel that is now fast being developed, that the innumerable multitude out of all nations will ultimately come to be found standing before the Throne of the Lamb, which also is the Throne of God. The innumerable host will

have come out of the Great Tribulation, and so it is quite apparent that it is in the time of the Great Tribulation this Gospel of the Kingdom is once more to be preached. But the Great Tribulation cannot take place until after the Church, which is to be the Bride of Christ, has been raptured away to Heaven for the marriage that is there to happen. The Lord has already spoken from Heaven, regarding His own believing people: "I will keep thee from the hour of trial, which shall come upon all the world."

And the Lord has said, that "when this Gospel of the Kingdom has been preached in all the world for a witness, that it is then THE END is to come." That is the very end preparatory to the inauguration of the Kingdom! But it is not till after all true believers have been caught up from the earth, the Gospel of the Kingdom will again be preached. Not till then! For until the moment the last believer has entered the Church through faith, it is the Gospel of Grace only that is to be preached. But, when that Gospel of Grace has completed its purpose among men, in the making and gathering out of the Church, which is to be the Lamb's wife, and is to reign with Him in His Glory, then will the Gospel of the Kingdom again begin to have witness to the nations.

What It Is.

This Gospel of the Kingdom is all about the King and His coming Kingdom. It is that which is specially the message of the Old Testament, and only of the New Testament, where that book has to do with what is to happen after the Church is completed and has gone from the earth. For example, there is what the Lord said in Matthew 25: "When the Son of Man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the Throne of His glory, and before Him shall be gathered all nations," that is right here upon this very earth, "and He shall separate them one from the other."

That coming of our Lord to sit upon His Throne of Glory will not be until after the Gospel of the Kingdom has again been preached as a witness unto all nations. It is then that the knowledge of the Lord is to cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. It is then, as Isaiah tells us, "that He shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares,

and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." You will see that there is no confusion for us, in regard to the unfolding of the Divine purpose, as that is thus made known in the Scriptures, when once we have discovered the Divine programme which God has really caused to be precisely made known.

The Witnesses.

It was men of Israel's race that proclaimed the Gospel of the Kingdom when it was first announced to their nation, on the occasion of the first advent. The same will it seem to be on the occasion of the second advent in glory. There are now on the earth tens of thousands of Jews, not now ready to receive the Gospel of Grace, but quite ready to again proclaim the Gospel of the Kingdom. Thousands of these are now in Palestine. They are entirely convinced their Messiah is soon to come. It is because of that solemn conviction they have gone back to the land. These are just as much satisfied that the coming of the Messiah is now near, as are all understanding Christians, that the time of the rapture of the Church is right at hand. Through their unwillingness to accept Christ as the Lamb of God, Who died to take away sin, they will not be among those caught away, but they are now near enough to the Kingdom to proclaim its actual nearness, when the true Church of Christ has been taken up to meet the Lord in yonder heavens.

The Lost Programme.

The Apostles began to mention the great Divine plan soon after the day of Pentecost. It was to Jews at Jerusalem, they said: "Repent ye therefore, and be converted that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and He shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you." When was it Jesus Christ had been preached unto these Jews? It was before they had crucified Him, when John the Baptist, the Twelve, and the Seventy had borne witness unto them of the then nearness of the Kingdom. But, they had rejected and crucified the King, and now the apostolic preacher announces that Him, "the heavens must receive until the times of the restitution of all things, which God

hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began."

But it is in connection with the first general council of the Christian Church, ever held, that the Divine programme seems to have had its clearest presentation. The council was held at Jerusalem. A new situation had come into being through the wonderful blessing that had attended the preached word everywhere. Evangelists had taken the Gospel to the Gentiles, and large numbers of them had been saved. Such a contingency had never really been contemplated by the first Apostles. Therefore, the leaders of the Church came together for consultation. The result of their meeting was the declaration, under Divine inspiration, of God's programme for this present age, and what will follow after.

A glance at Acts 15: 14, 17 will clearly show that, in regard to the Divine programme, as to the future, there are really four distinct features.

(1) God visits the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His Name. This is the object of the preaching of the Gospel in this age. It is to call out from the world a people to be constituted as the body of Christ, the Church, which is to be His bride. Remember, this is all the Gospel ever has done in any country, at any time. Even in Pentecostal days only the few responded to the call. This calling out is to end some day. Then will come the second number of the programme.

(2) "After this I will return." This is the Second Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, His actual appearing in glory. While the Old Testament makes clearly known the fact that there must be a Second Advent, yet it is in the New Testament we discover what is the first thing to happen when the Lord returns. He is to call away His waiting saints. The number of believers being then completed, the whole Church will be called up then to meet the Lord in the air. (1 Thess. 4: 13.)

(3) Then we have the third item in the Divine programme. Christ is to build again the tabernacle of David which now is fallen down. This will also be the restoration of the Kingdom of Israel. (Acts 1: 6.) For God will yet gather together His ancient earthly people, and the oath-bound covenant with David will then be fully accomplished.

Thus will follow on the fourth number in the Divine programme.

(4) The Residue of Men will seek the Lord. This will really be a world conversion, but that is not to take place till after the Coming of the Lord, and after the national conversion of Israel.

What a pity it is, this Divinely-inspired programme should have become a lost programme to the Church generally! This loss has caused appalling confusion and has made possible the unholy claims of a false Church. But never forget the tremendous fact. The Bible nowhere teaches anything contrary to the four points of this complete programme, thus made known in that first Church Council held in Jerusalem. The teaching of every parable, every command, every doctrine, and every incident related, everywhere, shows that in this dispensation the one purpose of preaching the Gospel of God's grace is to call out and separate from all the nations a people unto the name of Christ. These are a called-out people, and constitute the Church, the mystery of God now in the world. Jew and Gentile alike are now one in Christ.

Must the World Hear?

It is now a startling thing I here have to say. It may be altogether different to anything some of my readers ever before have heard. Still, if it is the truth of God, and I believe it is, why should there be any hesitation in saying it? What it is, is this. Nowhere in the Bible are we ever taught to believe that every person in the world must hear the Gospel preached before the Second Advent of our Lord can take place. Some, who believe in the return of Christ, have had a suspicion in their minds that this was necessary. Therefore, the Lord's coming must still be a long way ahead, seeing so many have yet to hear the Gospel. I should think it would be a long time before we could begin to expect to be called away to meet our Blessed Lord, if that were so, seeing we are told that nearly 1000 millions, as yet, have never even heard of God's redeeming love. But not one single passage in the whole Bible would seem to teach this. But some would suggest that it would only be a just thing that all should have opportunity to either accept or reject

the truth. Then, while carefully refraining from speculation regarding things which the Almighty has seemed to keep for His own council, I now raise the question, What of the vast multitudes who have died during the last nineteen centuries also without having heard the Gospel? Let us be perfectly frank and clear in our consideration of these solemn truths. The Bible has never said once, that all must hear the Gospel of Grace before our Lord can descend from Heaven for His Bride, the Church. It is distinctly written, that such as have sinned without law shall also perish without law, and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law. We must leave it all there.

God's Desire.

It certainly is in the desire of God that all men should be saved. His word is pellucidly clear in that regard. He is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. That is why He is longsuffering to usward. It is also why He has waited nineteen hundred years, while the Church has been given the opportunity of proclaiming throughout the whole world the Gospel of grace unto salvation. But never by one word does the Scripture ever mention that all the world in this Age would hear it, and far less does it ever suggest that before Christ comes the world will have come to be saved, and the Kingdom of God be here, as so many of the preachers have asserted. It would be an entirely hopeless proposition, were it so, in the light of all history, and in view of the strange conditions that now are everywhere developing in this unhappy old world.

Still do we say to God in our prayers: "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is done in Heaven," but never yet has the will of God been done on earth as we know it is universally done in Heaven. At the time of the Deluge, only one family was found anywhere approximating to the will of God. This only was why the Divine judgment ultimately fell.

In Abraham's day the number of known persons desirous of even understanding the will of God might then be counted on the fingers of one hand. In the days of Israel's separation and favor, apart from Moses, Aaron, and a few other

worthy souls, there seemed but a few who desired that their lives should be pleasing unto the Almighty.

Then, at the end of the age, came Christ, the only One Who ever cherished completely the one purpose to live His life unto the will of God. It was He alone Who could say: "In the volume of the Book it is written of me, Lo, I come to do Thy will, O, My God." That purpose was behind the offering of Himself on Calvary. He was then doing the will of His Father. "Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered; and being made perfect, He became the Author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him."

And how many have there been found in proportion, during the last 1900 years, in real earnest about living their lives unto the will of God, that is, like the holy angels in Heaven now are doing? No one can think for a moment that the strange, abnormal and fearful ecclesiastical development called "the Church" in various lands, during the past centuries, has ever been obedient to the will of God in its unhallowed tyranny in regard to mankind. And whatever is claimed by the modern pulpit, no sensible person is likely to imagine, even for a moment, that the misery, crime and sin of every kind, now everywhere in the world, is in the doing of God's Will. There are many earnest souls prayerfully seeking to live their lives out to the glory of God. Yet, but few are these, compared with the vast multitudes of human beings to whom the Almighty is unknown, and in whose lives there is not the slightest response to the invitations of the Divine Gospel.

We may well thank Heaven for the three million souls, said to have been won to God from heathen darkness during the last century. But when we are told that in the same time the world's heathen population has actually increased by 200 millions we are really appalled. In this wonderful missionary age of the Church, large numbers are surely being led into the knowledge of the Gospel, but, at the same time, there are millions of other helpless people being swallowed up by Mahomedanism. Very blessed results have attended the efforts of that noble army of missionaries in China, yet are there many millions more of such heathen souls there, than when the first modern Christian missionary landed a hundred years since. For every convert added to

the Church, a thousand souls are added to Chinese heathendom by mere growth of population. So that apart from what is made known to us regarding the sure carrying out of the Divine Programme, as stated in that first Christian Council at Jerusalem, we might easily be dismayed. But we are not, for we know that our Lord is coming again, and when He comes He is to be King over all the earth, and in that day will there only be one Lord, and His name one.

The Position Now.

After all, are there really many on the earth now that live their lives to God? In other words, is this old world, from the Bible viewpoint, really growing in righteousness? I wish the answer might be yes, but the known facts are dead against.

It is said that out of 1600 million people now on this earth, only 410 millions are nominal Christians, while all the rest are heathen. But included in the nominal Christians are all the infidels, the criminals, the harlots, and all the unbelievers that go to make up the population of every so-called Christian land. Also in this number have to be reckoned all the Spiritualists, Theosophists, Mormons, and the devotees of the great variety of modern religious cults that are now flourishing greatly everywhere. When we remember all that, we cannot help but wonder if the estimate given by some thoughtful person may not be about correct. This is, that out of the 1600 millions of this world's population, probably not more than 15 millions are intelligently and honestly seeking to live their lives to the glory of God. so that through faith in the atoning death of the Son of God, they have fully entered into the salvation and purpose of the Divine Creator.

Is the world growing better? That is a sensible enough question, but what is the use of considering it when we know that even the great so-called Christian populations are seething with fearful sin? Why is it the sons of good families in India, China, or Japan can spend years at a University centre, say, in England or America, and then go back to their own land and people more scornfully indifferent to the claims of Christianity than ever they were? It is because they find sin is just as open and unashamed among the "Christians" as among the heathen. These surely learn that

many ugly forms of sin are openly practised in public in the Christian land, that would not even be tolerated in private among their own people. And they also find that to the vast majority of professedly Christian people the claims of religion are not very real, so that even among the best people there is less readiness to confess Christ than there is among heathen people to proclaim devotion to their gods.

And, after all, in what way can vast multitudes in Christendom be deemed better than are the opium-soddened and demon-energised multitudes of heathen lands? Is it any wonder, either, that the consecrated men and women who are earnestly endeavoring to carry out the great commission, that is, to preach the Gospel to every creature in this wonderfully brilliant age of ours, find themselves hopelessly baffled in their attacks upon the tremendous citadel of heathen idolatry?

Gospel Triumphs.

It is not the expression of a hopeless pessimism that has constrained our attention to the actual facts in regard to the world's present condition as before God. During recent years, the preaching of the Gospel has certainly been attended with wonderful blessing. Among the most degraded of heathen people have really come some of the sweetest of God's saints. Everywhere has it been fully proved that still the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation unto all that believe. This very feature of Christian experience, that after many long centuries had passed, in so brief a space of time, all the nations of the earth should have had preached among them the unsearchable riches of Christ, is surely one of the sure signs of the near return of the Lord. The wonderful thing followed close after the dark ages, and it was to be at midnight, the Lord taught that the cry would be raised, to go out and meet Him. An awakened Church has simply meant the realising of responsibility regarding a perishing humanity. Many among the heathen nations now await as eagerly, the coming again of our Lord Jesus Christ, as do any others.

Bishop Moule, of Mid-China, says that when he first landed in that Empire, it held less than fifty Protestant Christians—in the first decade of the twentieth century there have been 16,000 martyrs. Over twenty years ago the

Christians in Korea numbered seven; in 1908 alone there were fifty thousand converts, and since then there have been many others. Similar blessed victories in other lands might be here recalled.

But, we may not forget the notable fact. The preaching of the Gospel among the heathen to-day is having just the same result as it has always had everywhere among all other nations. What historical precedent have we for presuming that all the heathen nations will entirely receive the Gospel? Where is there a single nation that has ever done so? Has the land of England, the most exalted and most enlightened of all the nations? Think of the awful sin, the drunkenness and gambling, the pleasure-loving, and abounding shameless godlessness that prevail throughout our Empire. Thank God for elect souls everywhere. But, oh, the multitudes who madly prefer the Broad Road! But, if we may not expect much better results from the preaching of the Gospel among the heathen than have been found in England, America, Australia, France, Germany, and the other lands, is it any use to send missionaries anywhere? In the light of the multitudes that have been saved, and in regard to the Divine command to preach the Gospel to every creature, such a question should never be raised.

Does it not appear almost miraculous how this wonderful century of missions came into being? A humble cobbler, William Carey, was used of God to awaken the Church everywhere. And we may not forget that in the prophetic unfolding of the history of Christendom, as given to us in the Book of Revelation, this remarkable modern missionary movement is clearly foretold. There, the Lord, addressing the Church, says: "Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it." Then it is declared how the Church at this time will have a little strength, and to the faithful the promise is made that "they will be kept from the hour of trial which is coming upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." How is this awful period to end? By the coming of the Lord, Who here says: "Behold, I come quickly; hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown." (Rev. 3: 11.) Therefore, we learn that this great missionary movement, in which the open door to the whole world was to be made for the preaching

of the Gospel, is to immediately precede the return of the Lord. How near, then, that event must now be!

Does it Discourage?

But, will such a doctrine not discourage missionary enterprise? It certainly does not. Every Christian who believes in the near return of the Lord is tremendously in earnest in connection with Missions of all kinds. That is a fruit of the doctrine. It has been seen in the lives of a multitude of devoted missionaries. It is not for consecrated men and women to question results. Theirs is to go. There are many living out yonder in heathen darkness who will respond to the call of Christ when they hear the message. Every soul thus brought in, is hastening the return of the Lord. And it is in heathen lands where the greatest triumphs of the Gospel are to-day being achieved; so that it has been claimed that this alone has saved the Church in the home lands, in these last days, from absolute and utter collapse. If the Church had not now the Foreign Mission enterprise on its hands, God only knows what would be its condition.

Why do all in the nations not receive the Gospel? Because of the terrific power of sin. For a heathen man to become a Christian means not only a fearful fight with his own passion, but it is also against the awful debasing temptation that is all around him. The signs of the flesh, the world, and the devil meet him everywhere. The most demoralising objects, which only cater to the basest of passion, appear at every turn. The great wonder is, not that only some respond to the call of Christ, but that there are any.

And then, not only is the Bible sent to the heathen from Christian lands, but there also goes in the same vessel rum, guns, munitions of war, and every possible form of bad literature as well. The mad theories of Haeckel and the brilliant, infidel philosophies of Voltaire are more attractive to the half-educated heathen than is the Gospel that tells him not to pander to his lower passions, but to deny them. What, therefore, are we seeing now in regard to all the heathen nations, among whom the Gospel of Divine grace has been faithfully preached? Precisely the same condition as has hitherto prevailed among whom the Gospel came many

centuries before. As we have seen, not more than one in four, at the most, have ever accepted Christ. The proportion now is certainly a long way less. The modern drift is right away from God. The Apostle said, regarding the Gospel, "Though we, or an angel from Heaven, preach any other Gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." Strong language is that, but it is right in harmony with everything taught in the Bible. And what we are now finding, even throughout the whole of Christendom, is that new cults of religion, which are entirely different to the Gospel preached by the holy Apostles, are now having greater acceptance than ever the Gospel of Christ has had, in certain directions, at anyrate. Learned men are simply pleasing themselves as to what they will believe about God and the hereafter. The Bible is surely a discredited Book. The general philosophy of life and being is almost universally right away from God, and the Gospel Christ gave His Church to proclaim among men.

Such general condition is right out of harmony with the view that the world is yet to be saved through the Gospel. How can it ever be done, when every real and vital feature of the Gospel is now being generally discredited? Let us face the whole matter squarely.

The very same condition is now actually operating everywhere in the lands unto which, more recently, the Gospel had been taken. Where formerly mighty Gospel victories had been achieved, the message is often coming to be greeted with as much scorn, as now it is meeting with in our so-called Christian lands. Remember, the heathen have some measure of justification for the new position regarding the Gospel, so many of them are coming to take, seeing that from the lands the missionary of Christ came to them have now also come the philosophy of absolute rationalism. While many, even among their missionaries, have been found traducing the very Gospel they were supposed to have come to proclaim. The whole situation presents a really tragic anomaly. The heathen have only to learn how to read and immediately is made available for them a philosophy that makes them laugh out loud at the "obscurantist Gospel," as it is now called, their missionaries first brought to them.

The New Situation.

This has to do with the growing shadow of world-wide revolution in regard to older conditions. There is not an intelligent person anywhere but now believes that the mighty cataclysm is simply inevitable. The forces making for world revolution are everywhere growing in power. It is only a question of time. All the other mighty things in the life of humanity, which we have already considered as being sure signs of the times in regard to the nearness of our Lord's Return, have all of them had their place in leading right up to circumstances as they now are. Everything has been preparing the way for the ultimate climax. There is to have expression, at least for a time, world-wide revolution against all stable government and against God. Its preparation is going on in heathen lands, as in all the others. The great empire of India is said to be seething hot with the new view of things. China only seems to rest from fighting when winter snow makes military movement difficult. In these and in all other lands as well, now, the missionaries of Communism are operating continuously. There is no pause in their enterprise. God's Word shows that the nations are all to combine for the final revolution and rebellion against God. We now see them all being got ready. Hence the work of the Gospel missionary has now become largely difficult.

Nothing gives any hope of universal acceptance of the Divine Gospel. Everything is just as the Lord and His Apostles said would be. "As it was in the days of Noah, and as it was in the days of Lot, so, the Lord said, would everywhere be regarding the actual coming of the Son of Man." False Christs. False prophets. Evildoers waxing worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. It is all there in God's Word about how it is to be in the closing days of this Gospel Age. Men shall have the form of godliness, but shall deny the power of it. They shall love pleasures more than they will love God. That is all the Bible teaches about the days before the Coming again of God's dear Son to this world. And such are the conditions now.

A Challenge to God.

It is that, the present world condition seems now to be. The Bible is discredited. The Church is making its own Gospel, and discarding that given by Christ. The nations turning

away from God. The Gospel preached, in heathen lands, now confronted with a philosophy manufactured in the lands from whence to the heathen, at anyrate, the Gospel seemed to have come. Scoffing, contemptuous, supercilious and callous indifference everywhere. Is it not all a challenge to the Almighty? Does it not indicate that God again will soon have to intervene?

"Our Lord is now rejected, and by the world disowned.
By the many still neglected, and by the FEW enthroned."

What then? Well, what is likely to be the logical termination in regard to a condition that has fast become the general condition, in regard to the Divine Gospel among all the nations? Is it not just that, God has so clearly shown is surely going to be? That is, the Coming again of God's Blessed Son from Heaven to receive those who have believed on His name unto salvation, and to take vengeance on those who reject the Gospel. It is plainly foretold what is to be. "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel."

Is World Revival Likely, First?

Some honored preachers teach that before the coming again of the Lord from Heaven, we should expect to see a world-wide revival take place. I can only say, that in all the Scripture there is not one word that seems to justify such a confidence. Go all through the New Testament, and there cannot be found anything that suggests such a condition. In the Old Testament world revival is clearly taught, but in every such mention it has to do with what is to happen, first in regard to Israel, and then through this nation among all the other nations. But, that only is seen to be after Christ has actually come, and the Kingdom of Heaven has been set up over the world, with Christ sitting on the Throne which is His.

To look for a revival before the Lord comes, is certainly to put back the great event far away beyond the generation to which we belong. Why? Well, this is what I want now to say. The conditions of the time when Christ is to come are to be very similar in character to what are now everywhere to be seen. Spiritual declension and apostasy abounding everywhere. Therefore, if what is called world-wide revival

yet has to happen before the Coming of Christ, then the event will yet have to be reckoned a very long way off. For it would take many years after the revival, before such a condition as now is could again be brought about.

But, why should world-wide revival now be expected? There is nothing in the Scripture to justify the hope of it. Is it not better to be on safe ground? We should take things as they are, especially seeing that everything now shows it is the coming of our Lord we should have in prospect.

Where God's people seek for their own revival they will surely have their reward. Where the Gospel is faithfully preached it is still shown to be the true power of God unto salvation for all who believe. I have heard people pray for revival when what really was needed was revival just there where the prayer was being made. Are we willing to pay the price of revival? That is a pertinent question. God will revive those who want it, and mean what they pray.

But an unbelieving, dead world, it seems to me, not even God can revive. The instrument of revival always has been the Word of God. So that where the Word of God is dishonored, there can hardly be revival. It is a terrible thing to say. But it is surely true. God's Word is shockingly dishonored by multitudes in high authority throughout Christendom now. By what right then dare we expect world-wide revival before the Lord comes? Such a view rather makes out that God is responsible for no world-wide revival being. It is to bring in the ultimate world-wide revival Christ is again to be sent from Heaven into this sinful old world. But, before ever world-wide revival can come, the Son of God Himself must be here in Person. He has waited long enough, surely, for others to carry out His will. Every knee will bow to Him. The moment seems now right at hand.

The Time of it is Right at Hand.

Then, is there no hope whatever? Yes, thank God! It is the blessed hope of the Coming of the Lord. Please, do not allow yourself to be deceived by any unscriptural, false view of things. It is only the Coming of Christ to reign that will change the world. Then, and only then, will the knowledge of the Lord cover the earth as the waters the sea. All these things show how near the wonderful event is. The Lord is at hand, He is at the door.

CHAPTER XVII.

The Sign of the Scoffer

2 Peter, 3: 3, 7.

"There shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying: Where is the promise of His Coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the Word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: but the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men."

A remarkable thing is here suggested. It is something not always realised by Christian people. Otherwise, modern preaching would be very different to what it is. The suggestion here is, that the real message of this Epistle has to do with the Coming again of the Son of God from Heaven.

The conviction is always with me, that the main purpose of all the Epistles, distinctly relates to the same thrilling event. Indeed, it is just that, which seems the real intention of all Divine Revelation.

The Bible everywhere exalts the wonderful fact, that a day is to come when the whole of this earth is to be filled with the glory of God, and the Blessed Son of God is to assume the entire government of this old world.

We see it all in the Epistle, now before us. Our text is the climax of everything that goes before. The Apostle began his writing by reminding us of all that now is ours through the Gospel.

"The Divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him that hath called us unto glory."

There are given us "great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the Divine nature."

By these promises we are to escape the corruptions that are in the world.

Then there is shown us the means by which an abundant entrance may be ours into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.

That kingdom is not yet established.

Our Lord is the Nobleman who is now away in the far country, having gone there to receive the Kingdom, and then to return.

The exact time and circumstance when He is to assume the Kingdom is thrillingly depicted in the book of Daniel, as it also is in the book of Revelation.

The Old Testament prophet speaks of the occasion as the time when the Son of Man receives "dominion, and glory and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him."

John tells of the time when Heaven's voice will be heard declaring that the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ.

It is only when that wonderful moment has arrived that the abundant entrance into the kingdom may be ours. It is then the government of Heaven, in relation to this world, comes into actual being. The kingdoms of this world will surely then have become the kingdoms of our Saviour and Lord.

Therefore our entrance into it is still future. We cannot yet have entered that which as yet has no being.

There will apparently be different kinds of entrance into the everlasting kingdom. What the Apostle desires for us is, that our entrance may be a great one. An abundant entrance into a kingdom means an entrance in which there may be much of glorious circumstance.

It is one about which there can be much rejoicing, and which in itself will give special pleasure and glory to the Lord.

The apparent intention of all here written is that all Christians shall make it their business to ensure for themselves this abundant entrance.

Some might prefer to creep into the kingdom in such a way that their presence need hardly be observed. It is not that the Lord desires for any of us.

The Matter is Urgent.

The Apostle is in great earnestness that we should be quite clear in this regard. Like when Paul wrote to Timothy, Peter is now writing in full assurance that he is soon to leave this world. "Moreover I will endeavor that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance."

It is the glory of that coming kingdom that is then in the Apostle's mind. He himself had had a glimpse of its coming glory. His soul had been thrilled then by what he had seen.

When was that? It was when he and the others were "eye-witnesses of His Majesty." That was in the holy mount of Transfiguration.

So that everything that follows, in the Epistle, relates to the majesty and glory of the kingdom that is yet to be.

Before the kingdom comes, a terrible apostasy in the Church is to come. False prophets and false teachers will bring in damnable heresies. This apostasy will culminate in mocking rejection of the Truth of our Lord's return.

The Last Days.

These words about the last days settle the whole matter. There are to be last days. And it is in regard to these last days the Apostle would stir up our hearts and minds by way of remembrance.

Remembrance of what?

Remembrance of that of which the Apostle has just been reminding them. The same thing as that the Old Testament prophets had spoken about, and had been constantly reiterated by the other Apostles: "That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken by the holy prophets, and of us the Apostles of the Lord and Saviour." The whole theme and the all-important matter of Christian experience is the coming again of Christ.

The last days are those immediately before the inauguration of that wonderful event. Look up the connection and you will see it is just that. Knowing this first, that there

shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, "Where is the promise of His Coming?"

THE LAST DAYS!

What terrific expression of solemnity is behind an expression of that kind!

LAST DAYS! YOURS! MINE!

Our last days!

There is coming a time when you and I will surely be in our last days.

All other days will lie behind. There will be no future days. Our last days will have come.

The same is to be true for the whole world. This world is to have its last days.

These are to be the last days of Gospel opportunity, and the last days of solemn warning.

The last days are coming. Else, why have they such frequent mention in the Bible?

The last days are to be filled with awful peril. It will be easier for souls, then, to be lost than to be saved.

"In the last days perilous times shall come."

In them, wicked men and seducers are to wax worse and worse. At the same time, men shall have the form of godliness, but will have come to deny the power thereof. They shall also love their pleasures more than their God.

False Christ's and false prophets shall be deceiving many Our own Lord said that.

And here the Apostle solemnly affirms, that in the last days scoffers shall come and the subject of their scoffing, in the last days, is to be the Coming again of the Lord.

The Coming again of Jesus Christ to this world is to be the subject of scoffing in the last days.

Scoffing, in regard to the return of Christ, is to be one of the signs by which God's people will then know that the return of their Lord is near at hand.

The Scoffers.

Who are they? What are they? Were they to be open rejectors of Christ? Would they be infidels? or heathen? Hardly! Unbelievers have no understanding of Bible teaching in regard to the Coming again of Christ. Men of the world, these days, give a more sympathetic hearing to its message than do many professed Christian people. They

do not scoff at it, as some of the preachers have done. It is the prominent religious authority that scoffs at the message of the possible near return of Jesus Christ. Strange, is it not? The preacher in the pulpit is the one who scoffs at what is the central feature of all Divine revelation. Yet, after all, it is not strange. For here we have it, that in the Last Days, scoffers shall come, saying, Where is the promise of His Coming? If such were not now doing just that kind of thing, we could hardly know that we had reached the last days.

We have definite evidence before us, that these last day scoffers were to be, presumably, believers in the Bible. "For," say they, "since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation." The fathers were the Old Testament patriarchs. So, then, the last day scoffers at the truth of the Lord's return were to be found making mention of the fathers, when it suited them to do it.

They were also to be professed believers in the beginning of creation. That indicates their belief in a Creator, for a creation, of necessity, implies One Who created.

So it is quite evident, then, that the last day scoffers at the doctrine of our Lord's return to this world would not be heathen, nor infidels. They would be worse. They would be scoffers at Divine Truth. They would say, Where is the promise of His coming? All things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.

The Thing is Startling.

There have often been scoffers, in regard to the atonement of our Redeemer.

There have also been scoffers with reference to all the other great features of Divine purpose in regard to salvation. But this is scoffing of a special nature. It has to do with the Coming of the Lord.

This thing is really astonishing. That men professing to believe in a Creator should deny the ultimate glory of that Creator in His own world.

The Coming again of the Lord is surely the ultimate climax of all Divine purpose.

Otherwise, whatever else can be in the end of everything? An end there surely is to be, for it is the Last Days that are here under consideration. The last days precede the end.

It is unbelievable that all things are to continue for ever, as they are now. Such a thing is against all reason and against all experience.

Just as there was a beginning, so is there to be an end.

Why They Reject the Truth.

The answer given is twofold.

Because they say, All things continue as they were from the beginning. Therefore all things must for ever continue the same.

That is, they claim that the universe is under law that makes such a catastrophic event impossible.

You remember what is implied in the Coming again of the Lord.

The Lord is to descend from the Heavens.

The dead in Christ are to arise. Living believers in Christ are to be changed. All these are, together, to be caught into the air to meet there the Lord.

Now such a thing has never before been known in the world. All things in the world continue as they have done from the beginning.

Therefore, that such an event can ever be is an impossibility. It is only to be laughed at by those here referred to. Even God Almighty cannot do what His Word everywhere says He will do.

These are evolutionists! How do I know? Well, they say, all things continue as from the beginning. In their scheme of things there was a beginning of things, not a creation by one decisive stroke, but from a beginning everything went under the power of a law that can never be changed. This is now the claim of the modern evolutionist.

This evolutionary method of creation is accepted by most of the official teachers of religion, who now reject the Coming of the Lord doctrine.

So we here learn that they were to be evolutionists in the Church, who were to deny and scoff at this doctrine in the last days.

Another terrible thing is also as distinctly affirmed.

Such scoffers are to be walkers after their own lusts.

Well, what does that mean?

It means that they are not walking after the Spirit. The Spirit of God is given to the believer to show him the way in which he is to walk. These follow along the way of the Spirit. There is no condemnation to them that walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. We are also told that if we walk in the Spirit we shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh.

And what are the lusts of the flesh?

See Gal. 5: 19 for what the lusts of the flesh are. Adultery, fornication, uncleanness. These are chief of the lusts of the flesh.

Now, all men have lusts, but all men do not walk after their lusts. There are men who fight and who crucify their lusts.

And there is no man who believes in the coming of the Lord that can walk in his lusts. For "He that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself as He is pure." On the other hand, there is no one walking after the lusts of the flesh that has any time for such a doctrine as is this.

If a person is living in sin he does not want the Lord Jesus Christ to come. Of all the fruitbeds of doubt the chiefest is immorality.

Those who are living in sinful pleasure do not want the coming again of the One Whose eyes are as a flame of fire, and Who is to be revealed from Heaven with all His holy angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God.

Scoffing at the Lord's return, may not be a question of reason, of fact, of Scripture evidence, but of lust. This is a terrible thing. But it is here suggested and taught how that in the last days, at least, some of those who will be scoffing at the coming again of the Lord will be walkers after their own lusts. God helps us. It is all so very terrible.

But, it is that our Scripture so distinctly affirms.

In the last days, scoffers walking after their own lusts shall be found saying, Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were from the beginning.

If they were not walking after their own lusts, they would be more respectful in regard to such solemn words spoken by Divinely-inspired and holy men of God.

Then why should any understanding person be affected by scoffers at the doctrine of the blessed Hope? Why should we ever shrink from expressing our supreme confidence in regard to it? Should we ever be ashamed of the stand we have taken?

The position of those who scoff at the doctrine of Christ's return is really one of terrible implication.

It is not just scoffing at God, or at that which God has caused to be written for the benefit and instruction of His people, or at a great and glorious foretold event, but it is scoffing at something that is peculiarly precious to the Deity. That is the ultimate glory of His Blessed Son, Who has been so long despised by the wickedness of men. The judgment of such is clearly defined.

"I will come near you to judgment; I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against those that oppress the hirelings in their wages, and that turn the stranger from his right."

There is another startling feature in the guilt of those here spoken of.

They are guilty of a wilful ignorance. They are parties to a terrible oversight. An unwilling ignorance implies a sad condition. For a person to be leaving his home in the morning, never to return again to it, and knowing nothing of what is to happen to him, is truly in a sad condition. That is an unconscious ignorance.

But a wilful ignorance is appalling, especially in regard to any matter of clear Divine revelation.

If God has made this solemn event known as clearly as language can possibly do it, and men with all the evidence of it in their hands refuse its acceptance, then they are guilty of terrible sin.

They are ignorant, when they should have had the fullest possible knowledge.

An example of this is now before me as I type these words, while out on the great Pacific Ocean. In another part of the room a number of intelligent men are engaged in a game of bridge. A problem has just arisen in regard to the game. It seems a matter for keen dispute. They have

consulted all within reach of their inquiry. At last the ship's doctor comes along. They ask him. He gives his opinion, but says he will bring the book which treats of the laws that operate in this game. The book is brought and the matter is settled on the authority of the book.

What a little thing this is, in comparison with the solemn things of eternity! Especially in regard to all that is implied in the doctrine of the Coming again of God's Christ.

Life and death! Heaven and Hell! The eternal destiny of every soul in that whole company of card players is at issue.

Yet, they are not concerned.

They will not even ask anyone who might know. They are interested in a game of cards, but in the eternal, never.

In this matter they will not consult the Book.

They are wilfully ignorant, when they might have had the fullest of knowledge.

So also are the last day scoffers at the doctrine of our Lord's return and all that it implies. That is the exact condition of too many religious teachers to-day.

It is not at all difficult to understand how that those preachers, now found scoffing at the teaching about Christ's second Coming to this world, are astonishingly ignorant in regard to even the simplest details that relate to this doctrine.

They are often found to express the most grotesque caricatures of what is believed by those who humbly accept what is written.

Honest men of this type admit freely that they have never given the matter real study.

They are wilfully ignorant of what is written. They might have the fullest of knowledge, but they are not interested enough to search through the writings of holy men, inspired of God.

Of What They Are Wilfully Ignorant.

That all things have not continued, as they were, from the beginning of the Creation.

They are willingly ignorant of the most solemn fact of all history.

This is, that by the word of God were all things made. Not by evolution. Note that. This, here said, is the only process of creation ever made known. By God's Word were all things made that are made.

Three things are here plainly stated:

1. The heavens were of old.

2. And the earth was standing in the water and out of the water.

3. The world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished.

What then is here referred to is the Flood, the mighty deluge of Noah's day.

By this the world that then was perished. So that when they say that all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation, they are wilfully ignorant of what happened when the world was destroyed by the Flood.

The evidence in regard to the awful catastrophe is overwhelming. There is first the universal testimony of Scripture.

Not any other fact of all human history has greater confirmation than has this. Both Old and New Testaments give unswerving testimony in regard to the terrific event.

He that denies that there was such a happening denies the credibility of the Sacred Scriptures.

Then there is the testimony of human experience.

All the three great civilised races of mankind have carefully preserved the history of the Flood.

In each instance the most exact details are given.

The Chinese have it that the Chinese Noah was saved with three sons and daughters.

The Indian Noah of the RAHABHARATA was saved with seven Rishs, or holy beings. Even the Fijians talk of eight souls being saved from the Flood and who landed at Mbenga.

Another all-convincing fact for sensible men is the way ancient Chronologies support the approximate date of the terrible event.

The Assyrians placed the Deluge in 2234 B.C.—Luken.

The Greeks in 2300 B.C.

The Egyptians in 2600 B.C.

The Phoenecians in 2700 B.C.

The Mexicans in 2297 B.C.

All the ancient peoples of the earth held the same tradition in regard to the Flood with a wonderful and a literal detail.

The Testimony of Geology is Startling.

This is in view of the wilful ignorance of modern religious teachers.

Vast mud beds from the sea, filled with sea shells and fossilised fishes, are to be found far inland from ocean's water.

Sir Charles Lyall affirmed what is true.

"Vast beds of mud, inundation mud, are to be found everywhere on the earth's surface."

The opening of a slate quarry on the Snowden Range in Wales reveals an immense bed of gravel, full of sea shells, including species of shell-fish that belong to deep-sea life alone.

All this did not come by gradual deposit. Everything shows that when the awful thing happened, it was a time of wild churning together.

All over Europe, on the American Continent also, at the Antipodes, in New Zealand and in Australia, are to be found the same amazing evidences of the awful catastrophe, about which the Bible has so much to say.

Many other things in this connection could here be said, but this is not the time.

Enough now has been mentioned to show that those who think that all things have continued as they were from the beginning of the Creation, and on that basis scoff now at the possibility of our Lord's return, are only guilty of wiful ignorance.

Their sin is terrible.

The Judgment of a Finally Impenitent World.

Here is a series of terrific statements in regard to what yet has to be, in regard to the heavens and the earth as we know them now.

These are only held together by the same word of God that created them.

They are held in store, that is in regard to some other terrible expression of the Divine judgment. It is for a much greater catastrophe than that which happened at the Flood.

They are reserved unto judgment and fire.

Not with water, but with fire the earth is to be destroyed.

The heavens also shall pass away with a great noise.

The elements shall melt with a fervent heat.

The earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

It is that, God's Word says, is yet to be.

Scoffers of the Last Days may deny its possibility, but this is in the great fact of universal Divine revelation.

Its description is given in many places throughout the Scripture.

If this awful thing is not to happen, then the Bible is not true.

The man who says it is not going to happen is making God, or the Bible, His Word, out to be a liar.

But even the modern scientist tells the world that such a catastrophe is going surely to happen. Within the crust of this earth, on which we live and have our being, are mighty, blazing, unceasing fires that will one day burst out and destroy everything.

Only, the unbelieving scientist always puts the awful event far enough away from his own generation not to cause the least uneasiness for those belonging to it.

But the time of the awful calamity is clearly shown in God's Word.

So also is its purpose.

It is to be in the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

It is to be in the Lord's Day.

That is, in the day of the Lord's judgment.

The thing itself is one feature of the Divine judgment, in that great and terrible day. This is a day that is often spoken about in God's Word.

It includes the whole of the period, from that moment, when the Day of Gospel opportunity ends, and all the redeemed of Christ are raptured away from the earth, and Christ assumes the Kingdom, and right through to the close of the millennium.

It will, therefore, extend from the time of the Rapture to the end of the one thousand years of Messianic reign.

It goes right down to the time of the great white throne of judgment.

Why It Has Not Happened Before.

It was only because of the long suffering of God.

HE IS NOT WILLING THAT ANY SHOULD PERISH.

GOD WOULD HAVE ALL COME TO REPENTANCE.

This plainly means that God seeks the salvation of everyone. He desires all men to be saved.

Therefore, all then, in that awful judgment, might have been saved from it.

God had made possible the salvation of everyone.

God has done that. As in Noah's day, whosoever will may enter and be saved.

There will, therefore, be no excuse for those who are in that judgment any more than there was in the judgment of the Flood in Noah's day.

On the basis of all Divine Revelation I can now say with all confidence:

1. Every person who reads these words can be saved eternally from every penalty of sin.

2. No one at all need ever be among those who will feel the awful judgment of God.

3. No one can save himself from the Divine judgment.

4. Salvation is now complete. It has been quite finished. All that is now to be done is to receive it.

5. If this Divine salvation is not accepted, then there is no escape. Those who refuse mercy continue in their sin. They are unrepentant. They are like the lost in the Flood. They are rebels against God.

Now, my dear unsaved reader, account the long suffering of God your salvation. Reckon it that God has allowed you to live in sin, till now, in order that you may now receive salvation. You are not now among the lost in eternity, because God wanted you to be saved.

Behold, now is the accepted time. Now is the day of salvation. Is it yours?

CHAPTER XVIII.

What Shall be the Sign?

"Tell us when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of Thy coming? and of the End of the Age?" (Matt. 24: 3.)

It will be noticed that there are here three distinct questions that were asked by the disciples. The first is: "When shall these things be?" The second: "What shall be the sign of thy coming?" And the third question is: "What shall be the sign of the End of the Age?"

The answer of the Lord is really given in the Olivet address, to all of these questions. Though, it is necessary to notice that an answer to the first of the three questions is not here stated. It is not found at all in Matthew's account of the great Olivet discourse, which really was the Lord's answer to what the disciples desired to know. It is in Luke's description of the same discourse, as it is found, in the twenty-first chapter of his Gospel, that what the Lord told as to when "these things were to be," is stated. We shall see this as we go on. There must have been reason why it is so. Of course, behind the writing of the sacred books is the Holy Ghost. It is distinctly told us that these holy men only spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. So that, if Matthew does not give the Lord's answer to the first of the three questions, asked by the disciples, while Luke does, this can only have been, because it was in the Divine Will that thus it should be. There is really clear Divine intention behind the omission of the one disciple and the filling in by the other. Why this was so may be understood, when it is recollected that the Gospel of Matthew is peculiarly the Gospel of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Why Four Gospels?

The reason why we have four Gospels, instead of only one, is that four were needed to perfectly express the four-fold character of our Lord's great redemptive work. In a word, the four Gospels present the Lord Jesus Christ as filling four distinct offices. Each of the inspired writers view the Saviour in a distinct relationship, especially in regard to the special purpose for which each distinct Gospel was given. For example, in Matthew, Christ is presented as the Son of David, King of God's earthly covenant people, so that everything therein centres around the Kingship of our Lord. This Gospel begins with the declaration that He is the Son of David, and tells of the wise men at His birth, inquiring, "Where is He that is born Kng of the Jews?" Then all through this Gospel, everything stated seems to relate to the Kingdom. For instance, the Kingdom of Heaven is mentioned thirty-two times in the Gospel of Matthew, but never again in the New Testament.

In Mark, Christ is depicted as the Servant of Jehovah, and everything in this Gospel contributes simply along the line of that expression. There is no genealogy given, but more miracles are mentioned than by any of the other Gospel accounts.

In Luke, our Redeemer is set forth as being Son of Man, and that may be why His genealogy is traced right away back to Adam. Every expression of our Lord's ministry given in this Gospel seems especially to implicate His humanity.

But in the Gospel of John it is as the Son of God, the Saviour is revealed. While in Matthew, it is as King our Lord is specially set forth. All through the first Gospel it is this feature that is evident. The first two chapters speak of Him simply as the King, while the whole message afterwards relates only to the Kingdom of Heaven.

Therein is described the mission of the forerunner, immediately preceding our Lord's presentation of Himself as the King. Then, there is the King coming forward to announce His claim to the Kingdom, John and the others had declared to be at hand. The parables and the miracles as Matthew writes of them all seem to have some relationship with His Kingship. Then is related our Lord's final public

offer of Himself when He rode into Jerusalem, as the Prophet of God long before had foretold He would do. There was also His rejection by the nation's ecclesiastical leaders in the Temple. Everything the Lord then said to the Jewish leaders had to do with that rejection of Him as their King. It was then He wept over the city and people, and said of them that they would not again see Him, until they were willing to say: "Blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord." And immediately after that, Matthew tells us, He went out, and departed from the Temple, and it was as He was going out the disciples drew His attention to the great buildings of the Temple. "And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? Verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down."

And it was after that saying, as He sat upon the Mount of Olives, the disciples came unto Him privately saying, "Tell us, when shall all these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming? and of the end of the Age?" So that the first question really was this: When shall these things be? Yet, when we look into Matthew's account of our Lord's answer, not one word is given that seems to have the least reference to the destruction of the Temple and the carrying away of the Jews. We are certainly told of great distress that is to happen throughout Judea, but that particular distress is seen to relate to what is to happen, not at their dispersion, but rather at the time of the Jews' gathering back to the land, that is immediately to precede the actual appearing of the King through the opened heavens, right at the close of the Great Tribulation. What really is given by Matthew, is the Lord's answer to the last two of the questions asked by the disciples. But it is the answer to the first question that is rather clearly given by Luke, where it is stated that Jerusalem was to be compassed around with armies, and it would be then that its desolation would be nigh. It is actually told in history, that at the time the Roman armies gathered around Jesusalem for its destruction, the early Christians escaped from the city because of the Lord's words in Luke 21: 21. "For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled." Great distress was to come then upon the land and wrath upon the people. "They shall fall by the edge of the

sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled."

That is evidently the Lord's answer to the first of the three questions asked by the disciples, as our Lord sat with them on the Mount of Olives. It showed the destruction of Jerusalem, Temple and all, and the far scattering among all nations of the Jews. The Lord's believing people would know that the time for it would be, when they saw Jerusalem compassed about with armies. It is then, that they would know the time had come when not one stone would be left upon another of that mighty pile of buildings called the Temple. But, Matthew's account has nothing of that in it. What is there given is rather a very full answer to the last two questions asked: "What shall be the Sign of Thy coming? and of the End of the Age?"

"What shall be the Sign of thy coming?" Was the Lord angry with them, for asking such a question? Surely not. Did He say they had no right to inquire as to the future? Did He tell them they should have no interest in regard to what was to happen at the time of His return? There are some preachers now who say that it is wrong to want to know anything about what is to happen at the time of the Second Advent. But, it was not so with the Lord. He at once began to tell those who asked Him what is to be the sign when His coming may be anticipated as being right at hand. And the Holy Ghost has caused what He then said to be plainly written so that the Lord's people at that very time might have all needed information, in regard to the great event.

At anyrate, why was it the disciples asked such a question, anyway? It was only because their Lord, for days and days before, had been speaking almost entirely about the wonderful happening. They had been present when the Jews had finally rejected the presentation of their Lord as King. They themselves had gone out everywhere in the land of Israel proclaiming the message that the Kingdom of Heaven was then at hand. The message had been spurned. They were soon to see the King crucified. He was to go away from the world. No more was the Kingdom to be at hand. Was that to be the end? Was the Kingdom not to come at all? Never? How could they know? Only by what

the Lord would tell them. Not in any other way. There was to be a long interval of at least nineteen hundred years, in which a Church was to be gathered out from among all the nations, through the preaching of the Gospel of grace, concerning which the disciples then knew nothing. They wanted to know what was to be the end of everything, and their question was only perfectly reasonable. Who could tell them, if their Lord did not tell them?

To whom else could they go? And the Lord answered their threefold question. "When shall these things be? and what shall be the Sign of Thy coming and of the end of the Age?" But it was Luke, the Holy Spirit used to write about when the destruction of Jerusalem was to be, but Matthew was constrained by the same Spirit to more fully tell what would be the Sign of our Lord's coming and of the end of the Age.

The End of the Age.

This end of the Age is really the end of the Jewish Age, which age was about then to be interrupted, not ended, for to allow of the Gospel Age to intervene, in which the Gospel of Grace would be preached to the whole world, and in which a Church would be gathered out from all nations, to share with Christ, as His bride, the eternal glory. But, all Divine revelation shows that when the Church is completed, and called away to meet the Lord in the heavens, it is then, the Jewish Age will be resumed. That then will be the Time of the End.

Here has to be mentioned the missing week of years as it is seen in the great prophecy through Daniel of the seventy weeks, in regard to God's dealings with the Jewish people. "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy". In regard to this seventy weeks of years, at the end of the sixty-ninth week of years, Messiah was to be cut off, but not for Himself. But, in the account later of the seventieth week of years, it tells of the Antichrist and the end of the great Tribulation then to be. The break clearly indicates that a long period of time was to elapse after the cutting off of the Messiah. That

period is the one in which the Church is now being gathered out through the Gospel. When the Church is completed, then will resume the Jewish Age. At that time, the last week of years will come into operation. An understanding of the seventy weeks' prophecy throws wonderful light on the two questions: "What shall be the Sign of Thy coming? and of the end of the Age?"

The End of the Age is precisely the last seven years of Daniel's seventy sevens of years. What is told of the Lord's answer, through Matthew. therefore refers to the Lord's coming and what is to happen immediately before. It is, as the Lord Himself affirmed, when we see all these things, we are to know that the Kingdom of Heaven is again nigh at hand. But all of these things as they relate to the inauguration on earth of the Kingdom of Heaven, which then had been rejected, while Messiah was also then cut off, plainly refer to the Jewish people, more especially, and but indirectly to the world generally. Jerusalem is to be the culminating centre of everything, and the Jews are to be at the very heart of the awful tribulation that then is to develop everywhere. Still, while these things in Matthew twenty-four and twenty-five specially refer to Jewish conditions, and what is to happen on the earth at the time of the Inauguration of the Kingdom, yet are they written for our understanding, and it is when we see the Fig Tree beginning again to bud, and all the other things foretold to happen, that we are to know the Kingdom is at hand, and we are to look up and lift up our heads in full assurance that our redemption is then right at hand. So that there is to be a preparatory condition that is to lead up to the final culmination. The Lord's people are to see that preparation everywhere going on, and by it they will know the great event to be near, and will be found watching for it.

Clearest Prediction is Given.

The first of these predictions in regard to the Divinely-given sign of the Lord's coming, is this: "Many shall come in My name, saying, I am Christ, and shall deceive many." Strange is it that among all the wonderful things relating to the present restoration of the Jews to their own land, thirty-six false christs have already arisen around Jerusalem. If that is so now, how will it be after the Church has

gone? Well, the Lord has clearly told us, and as has been seen in an earlier chapter, the fearful religious apostasy, now operating throughout the whole of Christendom, is quite in harmony with what we are told in the epistles is to everywhere develop, in preparation for world acceptance of the Antichrist.

Wars and Rumors of Wars.

That also is to be a sign of our Lord's coming. "And ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet." Remember this is given as a sign of the Lord's coming. But when such general condition prevails, it is not of necessity the end. It is only the beginning of what will lead up to the end "For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom."

It is a remarkable thing. Not so very long ago there were many in the Christian Church who were teaching that there would soon be no more war in the world. The influence of the Gospel of Jesus Christ was already having such effect that the nations, realising the folly of war, were soon about to beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks. The preacher who then ventured to say that the Lord always had taught how that right down to the close of this Age there were to be wars and rumors of wars, with nation rising against nation, as one of the features by which the Church would know the return of the Lord would be near at hand, was looked upon as a miserable pessimist and even an enemy to faith and the Kingdom.

Indeed, there was no need for the Lord to come back any more. The preachers and the Church were making the world all right. They said it would be a pity for any such Divine interference to happen. But, then broke out the greatest war of all history, in which more lives were shattered into eternity than in all the wars put together of many hundreds of years before. The preachers were forgetting, as they are getting to do again, that it is among the nations, that have had the greatest Gospel opportunity, the mightiest preparation for war goes continually on. They were also shutting their eyes tight against what our Lord said was to be the sign of His coming, and that the Bible never teaches anything else but that of wars and rumors of war, nation

rising against nation, and kingdom against kingdom preceding Christ's appearing in glory.

Yes, this is to be the sign of the Lord's coming again, the world filled with warlike condition and circumstance. As Luke was led to write of what the Lord said would be, when the Kingdom of God was soon to be coming to the earth: "Upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear; and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth."

Whatever may have been before, it is that now is on this unhappy old earth. We are everywhere told that another great war will completely smash up all civilisation, yet are the nations ceaselessly and feverishly preparing for war. Never in all history, in a time of presumed peace, has the world been spending more money on preparation for war.

In regard to the world and war, Marshal Foch, of France, a while ago spoke words of very deep significance. He said: "Everyone would like us to believe that another great war is a remote contingency, but the fact cannot be ignored that one may come at any time, unexectedly, from any quarter. It may involve the whole world. If another war comes, it will be more terrible than the last. We hear continually of new discoveries for making war. Notwithstanding the peace measures of the League of Nations, we know every nation is engaged in research work, trying to perfect poison gas that will ensure the quick annihilation of its enemies. There is no doubt that deadly gases have been perfected, and that they will play the principal part in the next war. It is certain, in fact, that every weapon that makes victory surer will be employed."

This is how a cable despatch, a while ago, expressed the European situation: "All Europe is arming for peace. The assertion 'for peace' with which France justifies its unprecedented appropriation for a vast mobilisation of the nation, the reorganisation of the army, and new fortifications calling for billions of francs, was followed to-day by excited comments of the Italian newspapers for Italy's necessity for arming. Poland is always crying 'wolf.' Even the Swiss military Budget is more than 15,000,000 dollars for its four million population."

The claim of the United States is that because of Britain's great fleet, the Government must build more and still more battle cruisers. And so it goes on. The same continued preparation for war.

At the very time when the world was being congratulated on the acceptance of the Kellogg-Briand Peace Treaty, two of the world's leading statesmen were warning the world of impendng war.

Il Ducc Benito Mussolini, in speaking to the legislature in Rome, gave the first warning.

He said, "In spite of talk of peace the whole world is arming as never before. Newspapers daily are recording the launchings of submarines and other devices which certainly are not peaceful. The number of cannons and bayonets is increasing." Then he referred briefly to the Kellogg Peace Treaty: "We all favor peace, and all of us signed for peace. The Kellogg Pact is so sublime that we could characterise it as transcendental." This statement provoked laughter. "But the fact remains, the whole world is arming." He advised preparedness for Italy on land, on sea, and in the air. Then he made the following very significant statement: "When the storms are getting nearer, it is then that talk of quiet and peace is heard." This is exactly what the Bible says: "When they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction shall come upon them."

At the same time, David Lloyd George, in opening the Liberal Party's campaign in Manchester to promote peace, sounded a similar warning. His remarks were even stronger than Mussolini's.

Speaking also on the signing of the Peace Treaty, he said: "What more is now needed but to sing the Hallelujah chorus and go on building our New Jerusalem in England, free and unfettered? That is how it is intended to be, but that is not how it is. Since we signed the Peace Treaty armaments are steadily increasing. All things show now that the world is heading for war."

Never has the armed might of the world been so great. Whereas the China of the Manchus had an army of 400,000, China to-day has 2,500,000 armed men. "The armaments of France," Mr. Lloyd George informed the House of Commons, "are four times as powerful as those of the great German Army in 1914." According

to the Year Book of the League of Nations the standing armies of Europe total 3,000,000 men; and at the cost of £700,000,000 a year the world maintains 5,500,000 men under arms, with navies of 5,047,300 tonnage. "All the world," says Signor Mussolini, "is arming."

In the light of all such things, American people say their President is perfectly justified to urge upon the nation the building of fifteen new cruisers and the expenditure of 700 million dollars for defence. As long as the Prince of Peace, our Lord, is not upon the throne, wars will continue and no pacts and treaties will stop them, and the best known method for the preservation of peace is preparedness.

What the Coming War Will be Like.

Mr. Albert Lapoule, after long investigation, speaks of the coming war in a recent number of "The Living Age." He thinks it will be a chemical war:

"Germany, forbidden by the Versailles Treaty to make official researches for the development of war chemicals, has created the world's greatest privately-owned organisation for chemical production, which can be turned to war purposes practically overnight," he asserts.

France, England, the United States, Japan and Italy, who deplored the principle of poison gas warfare at Washington in 1922—but did not sign the treaty prohibiting it—all are preparing intensely for such a war. Poland, Czecho-Slovakia, Spain, Russia and Belgium likewise have engineering corps engaged in such research.

"If war broke out to-morrow it would be as different from the war of 1914 as that war was different from the Napoleonic wars," he declares. "Not battle lines, but entire nations would be the front, and there would be no distinction between the civilian and military population."

The gases and poisons now available, when carried over a country by huge aerial fleets, are capable of devastating cities and great sections of a nation almost overnight, asserts M. Lapoule. "To carbon monoxide and hydrocyanic gas, which give the victim no time to run for shelter, yperite and other substances will be needed," he said. "They will compel the enemy to wear gas masks long enough to exhaust the men, no matter how resistant. There will be whole

regions where, unless one has artificial protection, it will be impossible to live."

The newly-developed magnesium bombs, he declared, are capable of penetrating the most substantial buildings, and because it is almost impossible to extinguish their flames, laying waste to a whole city at a single attack. Phosgene bombs, more highly effective than in the World War, now are capable of destroying all life within a mile area at the point where they are dropped."

Marshal Foch, the great general of the last war, was asked to describe what a great battle in the next war would be like. The following is his conclusion:

"Countless thousands of mighty guns pouring millions of shells upon the opposing forces—high explosive shells of a destructive power not known in the last war, poison gas shells whose deadly vapors penetrate through the protective masks and kill in a few minutes, shells scattering unquenchable phosphorous that burns through human flesh to the bone in half a minute. Hundreds of tanks were spilling death at the rate of a thousand shots per minute. Machine guns shot. Light automatic rifles in the hands of millions of men poured out hundreds of millions of bullets a minute—barrages so devastating that even a small bird could scarcely hope to get through untouched. The sky darkened with thousands of aeroplanes, raining a ghastly dew upon the earth below. Far back of the lines, cities and villages crumbling and in flames from devastating fire of artillery and bombs dropped from the air, shells and bombs that would raze a city block by the force of high explosives, or incendiary shell that seem to set the world on fire. . . .

"Aerial torpedoes, radio-controlled aeroplanes, even radio-controlled tanks and other engines of destruction guided by hands miles away—that seemed not beyond the bounds of the possible. To-morrow the world may be startled with a realisation that death may be borne on the wings of the wind by radio; that men may be electrocuted by contact with the air they breathe or stabbed by an 'invisible ray.' "

Read the 9th chapter of Revelation and the 3rd chapter of Joel and you will see this is not merely imagination. It is all what God in the Book of Revelation has said is going to be.

For the present year the French expenditure on war preparation is £85,000,000, an increase on the previous year. That of Britain is £114,000,000, while all the other nations is in the same proportion. It is not universal peace, but war for which the world is actually preparing. And as was said by Lord Sydenham, the other day, and he is 80 years of age: "I shall probably not live to see it, but this modern race of invention and development will result in a terrible crash." It is just that same thing our own Lord said 1900 years ago, that is to be the sign of the end of the Age.

Famines, Pestilences and Earthquakes.

The beginnings of these things are certainly just as evident on the earth now as are the universal preparations for war just considered. It may be suggested that such things always have been, and so they have, but what I am seeking to remind my fellow men and women, in regard to all of such things, is that, according to the testimony of the Divine Christ, such fearful things are to be on a terrific scale at the time this Age is fast closing. And those very conditions operate in many places now. The London "Times" has just reported how that alone in one province, that of Kansu, as the result of personal jealousy between two of the war lords, there whole communities have been completely wiped out, and pestilence following in the train of wholesale murder has practically depopulated large areas. A missionary, Mr. W. Simpson, estimates that 500,000 men, women and children have perished, because of this quarrel between two ambitious men, in this one province from slaughter, famine and pestilence.

Since the close of the Great War many millions of people have vanished from the earth through famine and pestilence. Every record of the Divine Scripture clearly shows that such destructions, following closely on the awful wars that yet are to be, and for which the nations now seem fast getting ready, will be altogether unparalleled by any such catastrophic condition that hitherto ever has been. Such terrible things only are mentioned, because they are in the message, our Lord gave, concerning what was to be in the Time of the End; and also have fullest possible description elsewhere in the Divine revelation. The Lord gave all such information beforehand, that we may watch, and pray

always, so as to be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man, when in His Kingdom He shall surely come.

Earthquakes.

Earthquakes are also in the sign about the End of the Age, as made known by the Lord. All other Scripture shows that unprecedented earthquake was surely to be, culminating at last in the greatest earthquake of all history. The Revelation account of it is to be found in chapter 16 and verse 18 of that book: "And there were voices, and thunders and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great." What is for us always to have in view is the fact that it is by the beginnings of all such conditions we are to know the coming of our Lord is not far away. He said: "When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." Therefore those who are accepting the message of the Divinely-given Sign, such unhappy condition is also a message of blessed hope. These terrible things are happening, whether or no we take notice of them. Those who do, well know that they plainly indicate the glorious deliverance that soon is to be.

That earthquakes are increasing in the same ratio, as in regard to all the other things Jesus Christ said are to be, at the end of this age, is evident to those that are watching them. A recent issue of "The Literary Digest" gives statistics of past and present earthquakes. It shows that the death toll of the twentieth century, with seventy-seven years still to go, practically equals the total for the entire eighteenth century, which hitherto held the record. During a period of three months, last year, the Lord's saying regarding earthquakes in "divers places" was certainly fully realised. In that brief space of time Smyrna suffered greatly. Next Bulgaria was visited, with hundreds dead and many thousands rendered homeless. Greece followed, and there many were killed and great damage done. New Corinth was destroyed, old Corinth having been blotted out in 1858. There were also severe earthquakes in Italy, Sicily and in South Africa, as well as in China and Japan. And in Palestine happened the greatest earthquake known in that

sacred land for 1200 years. So that, as the Age draws near its close, everything goes to show that the earthquake condition is surely developing. The more earthquake there is, the more it is recognised there is likely to be. This can indicate that the time of the greatest earthquake, that ever yet has been, is not now far away.

In the light of such solemn understanding, how solemn are those words we find in Hebrews 12: "See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from Him that speaketh from Heaven. Whose voice then shook the earth: but now He hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also Heaven. And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things that are shaken may remain. Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably."

I have read of someone who was in a part of South America in a time of earthquake. He mentions what a comfort it was to him then to look up at the stars in the heavens. While all the earth was being shaken, those mighty worlds above seemed perfectly stable and unshakable. Every believing soul, at this time of universal changing condition, may well rejoice in the fact that the kingdom to which they now belong is one that never can be moved.

The Beginning of Sorrows.

That is how the Lord speaks of the things to be in the days preceding His coming again. Great suffering is to come for those not saved when the Lord comes for His Church. Then many will seek to enter in, and so escape from what is coming upon the earth, as long foretold by the Lord, but they will not be able to enter in. Godly Jews will again be hated of all nations for the sake of the name of their Messiah, then soon to appear. False prophets will be then arising and deceiving many. Increasing and abounding iniquity will be everywhere, and then is again to be preached the Gospel of the Kingdom, which has already been considered in an earlier chapter of this book. The culmination will be the Great Tribulation, so often mentioned in the Bible as going to be at the close, in the final seven years

of the Jewish Age. It is this, the Lord said of it: "For then shall be great tribulation such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake, those days shall be shortened." (Matt. 24: 21, 22.)

The elect, thus specially mentioned, may be the 144,000 sealed ones of Revelation seven, and, perhaps, others like them.

The next thing to happen, after the Great Tribulation, is the actual appearing through the opened heavens in glory of the Son of God. This is what the Lord said: "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, AND THEY SHALL SEE THE SON OF MAN COMING IN THE CLOUDS OF HEAVEN WITH POWER AND GREAT GLORY. And He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds from one end of heaven to the other." (Matt. 24: 29.)

That is the same culmination of everything, as seen in the book of Revelation, at the nineteenth chapter, where we are told how the heavens are to open to allow the King of kings, with all the armies of Heaven to emerge therefrom. The remainder of Matthew 24 is taken up with signs and warnings of the closing days of the Age, leading up to the actual Appearing of Christ. The budding Fig Tree is set forth as the symbol of what is to happen in regard to the return of the Jews. Likewise, as were the days of Noah, so also is the coming of the Son of man to be, is what the Lord says. They were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, in the days before the Flood, so is it to be at the coming again of the Son of man.

Two shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, the other left.

It was about what then was surely to be the Lord said: "Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come."

There is also given the parable of the thief breaking into a house. If the good man had known, he would have watched. Therefore, the Lord said: "Be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh."

Three Parables.

Then are three parables given by the Lord, all which have to do with the End Time, and which were surely spoken for the instruction of the Lord's people now. The first is that of the servant, that, in my mind, at anyrate, refers to the last day professed teachers of God's Word. In view of the nearness, then, at that time, of the Second Advent of the Lord, He said: "Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom His Lord hath made ruler over His household, to give them meat in due season?" Who is such faithful and wise servant? Surely the one who gives meat in due season. What then is the meat for the season, when the return of the Lord, judging by the general operating of all the Divinely foretold signs, may be expected as being near at hand? Surely that which has to do with the coming again of Christ. It is the showing of God's people of what the Scriptures have to say of the mighty event.

Will many then be found giving such meat to the Lord's people? No! Not many such faithful and wise servants will then be found. The whole Scripture teaches that. "When the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?" Hardly! But it was the Lord Who said it: "BLESSED IS THAT SERVANT, WHOM HIS LORD, WHEN HE COMETH, SHALL FIND SO DOING."

If you read the rest of our Lord's application of this parable, you will see the future location of the servant, who was not faithful, in giving the Lord's people their meat in due season. The Lord "shall cut him asunder and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." That is, whatever is the place reserved for the hypocrites, it is there will be cast the unfaithful servants who failed, for some reason or another, to warn the people that the coming again of the Son of God to this world was probably near at hand.

The Wise and the Foolish Virgins.

This is the second of the warning parables spoken by the Lord, in view of His near coming again. It is to be found in chapter 25 of the Gospel according to Matthew. It begins: "Then shall the Kingdom of Heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps and went forth to meet the Bridegroom." Now, as to the time thus indicated, "Then," I am afraid that somehow a serious mistake has arisen in regard to the Divine intention. It has been assumed that the word "then" happening just where it does makes the entire parable only refer to a condition yet to be, and no reference whatever to past religious development. But you will at once see that it is a certain aspect of the entire history of Christendom that here finds expression, from its commencement, right down to absolutely the last phase. For we have everything that happened from the time the ten virgins took their lamps to go forth to meet the Bridegroom, to the very moment the wise ones enter to the marriage, and those called foolish are left on the wrong side of the shut door.

Why are they called virgins? And why is the number of them said to be ten? In this connection often arises another difficulty where no real difficulty should ever be. The Lord here speaks of the whole company of them as being virgins. Because of that, it is claimed, that all of the virgins are saved believers. Yet half their number are so foolish that the Lord says they cannot enter the shut door. It is unwisely assumed that somehow, later on, the door will once again be thrown open to receive those who were not at first quite ready to enter in. But the Lord neither here, nor anywhere else, ever suggests any such thing. It is therefore not only unscriptural but a most dangerous assumption to make. Even the suggestion of such a thing may encourage inconsistent professors of religion to persist in a condition that will only lead on to their eternal separation from God. In this very connection, how solemn and illuminating also is the awful divine utterance, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in Heaven, many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? And in Thy name have cast out devils. And in Thy name

done many wonderful works. And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity." This terrible deliverance is surely in distinct harmony with final issues in the parable of the Virgins. Because the Lord speaks of them all as being virgins with lamps, that in no sense implies that they are all eternally saved people. To assume it is to throw the parable out of harmony with the rest of Divine Revelation regarding inevitable results.

The Apostle Paul writes to the Christians at Corinth: "I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ," yet, as he remembers the sin into which many of them had fallen, how tenderly he exhorts them to "examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves." The Church in Sardis was as definite an expression of a certain phase in the ultimate development of Christendom as any other. In it were some who had not defiled their garments. But to the whole of that church the Lord says from Heaven: "If, therefore, thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee."

Ten is a number God uses to represent the whole: Ten Commandments—Ten Plagues—Ten Servants—Ten Lepers—Ten Pieces of Money, etc. So that ten virgins are mentioned here simply as representing the whole of Christendom, all who profess themselves to be saved, and are, and also those who profess themselves saved and are not. Five are wise, and are found ready to go in with the Bridegroom. Five are foolish, and the Lord says of them: "I know you not."

The Lamps.

What is said about the Ten is, that they took their lamps and went forth to meet the Bridegroom. What is a lamp for? To give light. Whatever may be the quality of its workmanship, a lamp is only of value as it is a light giver. In a sense every lamp professes to do that. Now, each true believer in Christ is said to do that same thing. "Ye are the light of the world." "Let your light so shine before men." "Ye are all the children of light." So then, when anyone professes to become a follower of Christ, he really professes to become a light-bearer. His profession is his lamp. "They went forth to meet the Bridegroom." The

Bible views every Christian as doing that. "Ye turned to God; and to wait for His Son from Heaven." So then, the virgins going forth with their lamps to meet the Bridegroom simply represent all professed Christians.

"And five of them were wise, and five were foolish." This is the Divine verdict concerning those who would profess Christianity. In what then did their folly consist? They took lamps, but took no oil with them. And you cannot possibly imagine anything more foolish than for a man to take a lamp with no oil in it, and hope thereby to give light in a dark room. The thing can never be done. You can even make a light without a lamp if you have some oil. But you never can make the least light out of a lamp if you have no oil in its vessel, no matter how chaste and valuable its workmanship. It is foolishness even to make the attempt. Of course, if a lamp have a wick, it may be possible to make it give light—for a moment. But, without oil, it will not go on. The Lord here shows it to be just as foolish to profess to be a Christian without having something that is absolutely necessary to eternal salvation. Oil in Scripture is the symbol of the Holy Spirit. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." The Holy Spirit is promised to all who receive Christ. But there must be true surrender to God. Then, "the Spirit Himself beareth witness with our Spirit, that we are the children of God." "Did ye receive the Holy Spirit when ye believed?" Making profession of Christianity without seeing we have the real thing puts us among those who took lamps but took no oil. The mere profession of religion will never save.

They all Slumbered and Slept.

The wise as well as the foolish did that. In what regard? In regard to the coming of the Bridegroom. Those who now reject the message sometimes say that the Apostles and early Christians all looked for the return of Christ in their day. So they did. The Lord here said of them all that they took their lamps and went out to meet the Bridegroom. But He also said, that, "While the Bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept." For long centuries the entire Christian Church seemed entirely oblivious to the possible return of Christ from Heaven. The message of even the greatest preachers made no reference to the Second Advent.

You will search in vain for light and inspiration on this truth through the old commentaries. It was not that way though with the Apostles. They continually proclaimed the certain return of Christ. Wherever they went, the fire spread. That was till their influence had passed away. Then came darkness. The ultimate ignorance regarding spiritual truth came to be everywhere absolutely appalling. It was that the Lord said would be: "They all slumbered and slept."

The Midnight Cry.

"And at midnight there was a cry made." Where? Here in this dark old world. By whom? Undoubtedly by men and women raised up for that very purpose. Why? Because the time had come. What is the cry? The same precisely as in the first commencement of the Christian message: "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet Him."

Now, my friend, in regard to the development of Christianity in the world everything has precisely happened as the Lord said in the parable would be. The early Church went out from the world to meet the Bridegroom. Then all slumbered and slept. Christian experience became dark. That Christ was to come again was entirely forgotten. Death only lay ahead for all. But a great cry has arisen. It is now being heard throughout the whole earth. It is ever swelling into louder volume. And its message is precisely what the Lord said it would be: "Behold the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet Him." Its effect is being felt everywhere in Christendom. Not all the professed followers of Christ receive it. The Lord never said they would. Those who do not are found everywhere going after those who declare they have oil to sell. What they usually have to offer is, however, but the substitute for the real thing. No one can buy or sell the Holy Spirit. Every possible expression of false religion is now in greatest vogue among many who once belonged to a slumbering church. Those who will not receive the truth are everywhere receiving what is false. We are now in the most important stage of the parable's expression. We know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of Man cometh.

What Next?

"Behold the Bridegroom cometh." What then? He will come. For what is He coming? Some have thought the virgins were the bridesmaids. But whoever heard of a bridegroom going for the bridesmaids? The bridegroom goes only for his bride. So Christ is coming now to receive His own espoused bride, His Church, unto Himself. They that are ready will then go in with Him to the marriage.

What then? Too late, the others will wake up to their terrible condition. Who are they that will then seek to enter when it is too late? All who had professed religion without making sure that they were right with God and were really ready to meet the Lord. What is this the Lord says to them? "I know you not." Then they were never His. "For the Lord ever knoweth all them that are His." They follow Him. He gives unto them now eternal life.

The Parable of the Talents.

We now come to the third parable, the one which concludes the second part of our Lord's Olivet discourse, and which was spoken in answer to the threefold question of the disciples, concerning His coming again. It is well to notice just that feature. This parable also was spoken in view of the return of the Lord. Its message is peculiarly for the Lord's own people, just as the first of the three parables had reference to those who professedly are His servants to feed the household of God. We have all to appear at the Judgment Seat of Christ. Every man's work is to be tried with fire. If any man's work shall abide, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire. It is a judgment of service that yet has to be for those that have entered salvation through faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ. This last parable shows us, that there are Christians with five talents, others with three, and some with only one. But all alike may have reward for service now, in the glad day that is near. Those Christians who have been faithful in the exercise of whatever talent with which they had been endowed, are to be made ruler over many things, and in a special sense, apparently, will enter into the joy of the Lord. The one talent person that fails, in the judgment, does not enter the joy of the Lord,

but is cast into utter darkness: "there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." It was that, the Lord said will be the condition of all such. We have no need to enter upon discussion now, regarding who this one talent servant of the parable can be, or in regard to what the outer darkness means for him. The Lord finished just there; surely we can do the same! If the Lord had wanted us to know more, He would have said it. It may not now be long, when the realisation of all such things will have become actual for all of God's dear people. May we now realise, that now is the time of opportunity and service. If we are faithful here, great will be our reward there. If we are not now faithful, in regard to our stewardship, it may well be because we have not made our calling and election sure, and are only building upon sand, instead of upon the Rock.

The Judgment of the Nations.

This was indeed the last thing the Lord had to say, that day, on the Mount of Olives, in answer to what the disciples had wanted to know, in regard to His coming again, and the End of the Age.

This is what is to be, immediately after the great Tribulation and the Son of man has emerged through the opened heavens.

"When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit on the Throne of His glory." I have written fully on this subject, in my book, "Great Future Events." It hardly seems wise to write all over again the same thing here. It may be sufficient to mention the various features of what is here said by the Lord.

First, this is what is to happen when the Lord comes from Heaven to this world. Therefore, it is a judgment to be set up on the earth. It is to be a judgment of nations, not of individuals. It has nothing to do with Christians at all. The sheep and the goats are divided on the right hand or the left hand, according to their treatment of the Lord's brethren. The Lord's brethren are the Jews. The Lord elsewhere said that This judgment of the nations takes place immediately after the Great Tribulation, and after Christ has come through the opened heavens. So that it would seem this judgment of nations will be chiefly on the

basis of the nations' treatment of the Jews, specially in that awful time of Jacob's trouble. The nations, then found worthy, will enter the kingdom of heaven, at that time, at last, being set up on the earth; the nations not found worthy will pass right out into eternal destruction.

From all thus said, it would almost seem that the destiny of every soul, then found on the earth at the return of Christ in glory, will then be for ever fixed. Either everlasting life or everlasting punishment will be the portion of everyone there.

The Last Word.

I have reached the end of my task. My book is finished. I have said what the limitations of space permitted me to say about the Signs which show the Second Advent of the Lord from glory to be at hand. Much more could have been said, perhaps all of it, with a measure of profit, but it may be that there is here quite enough. The whole matter is important. There can be nothing else of such vital interest for us all. If the coming again of Jesus Christ is so near as the signs would indicate the event to be, then the whole thing is of terrific urgency. Everything I have mentioned has been based entirely on the Scriptures. I have shrunk rigidly from the expression of what only can be human opinion. My aim all through has been to compare Scripture with Scripture, so that those who read this book will base their faith on God's Word alone. If the Son of God does not come soon, I am not to blame for suggesting that all the Bible signs of the great event are now in universal operation. I have only done in this book what the Bible teaches every true servant of God should now be doing. Should the Lord come for His waiting people as soon as now a great host of intelligent and understanding believers think He will, then it will be found I did no more than the Lord wanted to be done. In this book I have but sought to give the people their meat in due season.

My Reader,

If you have heard the Gospel of Divine Grace, and have been told that Christ died for your sins, and, go on doing nothing, you will never see that morning glory—never. For, how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation? If you refuse God's mercy now, you will then

have no escape. Do not think you will be permitted to have your chance of passing through the great tribulation and be among the nations who will then enter the period of millennial glory. You will neither be with them nor with the Church in Heaven. Your sun will have set in dark judgment. There will be judgments, earthquakes, and shakings of the earth, famines, pestilences, and other frightful scourges. For the Lord has said, that before the regeneration of the earth, He will empty the earth of all those who have offended. The watchman says it. The morning cometh, and **also the night.**

This matter is urgent. There is no subject of more vital importance to you. God loves you. He gave His Son to die for your sins. He seeks you to be reconciled to Him by the confession of your wrongdoing, and your acceptance of Christ. Receive Him. Honor Him. Trust Him. He will save you now. Then the voice of the watchman will clearly be for you, Behold the morning cometh!

My good friend, possibly yet without personal knowledge of the salvation of God, it is with tears in my eyes, I now pray, that this book will lead you to Him, Who once said: "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out."

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